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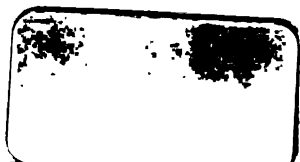
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WRAXALL'S  
HISTORICAL AND POSTHUMOUS  
MEMOIRS.



VOL. V.

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*Edmund Burke.*

*From a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

THE  
HISTORICAL AND THE POSTHUMOUS



OF

Sir Nathaniel William Wraxall

1772—1784

*EDITED, WITH NOTES AND ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS  
FROM THE AUTHOR'S UNPUBLISHED MS.*

BY

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, F.S.A.

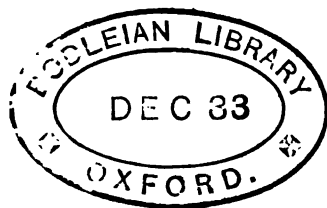
*WITH NUMEROUS PORTRAITS*

*IN FIVE VOLUMES*

VOL. V.

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POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS  
OF  
MY OWN TIME.

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4th MAY 1787.



INTELLIGENCE of the favourable result of Pitt's interview with the Prince of Wales not having been generally circulated before the House of Commons met, curiosity attracted an unusual concourse of members, when Newnham, in few words, informed them that the motion which he had announced was now no longer necessary, and therefore he should decline bringing it forward. Pitt, offended at the sarcastic insinuation conveyed in the monosyllable *now*, after expressing his satisfaction that the measure was admitted to be no longer necessary, subjoined, "I cannot help declaring, that as I always considered it to be unnecessary, so I do

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not now perceive it to be more so than at the time when the notice was given. I am, however, happy to find that we are at last of the same opinion on the subject." So pointed an animadversion called up Fox, who, while he deprecated any expression which might disturb the desirable unanimity, nevertheless added, "I remain now as much convinced that the motion was necessary, as I am persuaded at this moment of its being no longer necessary." The Chancellor of the Exchequer having justified the King's conduct throughout every part of the transaction, as "uniform and consistent, departing in no one instance from the principles which always directed him," Fox made a similar declaration or protest on the part of the Prince.

[*9th May 1787.*] The proceedings in the prosecution of Hastings, which seemed to have been suspended during near three weeks while the application of the Prince of Wales to Parliament occupied the public mind, were resumed and terminated, as far as they related to the House of Commons, at this time. A debate of great interest took place on the second reading of the articles of impeachment. Lord Hood, with the feelings of a man to whom the command of fleets had been delegated under circumstances of the greatest personal responsibility, made a short and plain appeal in favour of an individual, who, whatever errors he might have committed, had unquestionably rescued that valuable portion of the empire intrusted to his care from almost inevitable subversion. Wilkes, though during the two or three last sessions he had rarely taken any active part, and though he already began to feel the infirmities of approaching age, came forward on this occasion. The same unconquered spirit, wit, and classic fire which he displayed on the 30th of April 1763,

when brought before the Earls of Egremont and Halifax by virtue of a general warrant, pervaded every sentence that he uttered. But his articulation, which never had been perfectly distinct even in youth, grew annually more embarrassed from the inroads of time on his organs of speech. After stating that, however he might have been dazzled with the splendour of eloquence or charmed by appeals to the passions on the part of Hastings's accusers, he remained wholly unconvinced by their arguments, "I have heard him," continued Wilkes, "more than once compared to Verres. But the House ought to recollect that when the governor of Sicily was accused before the Roman senate, scarcely an inhabitant of that island could be found who did not exhibit complaints against him. In the instance before us, though the prosecution, or rather the persecution, of Mr. Hastings has been already nearly three years in progress, yet not a single charge or imputation on his conduct has been transmitted from India." "When we consider," resumed he, "that while the empire was mouldering away elsewhere, Mr. Hastings by his exertions preserved unimpaired our possessions in the East, I am covered with astonishment that a faction in this assembly should have been able to carry on the proceedings to the present point. I trust, for the honour of the nation, it will be terminated and finally extinguished by a very considerable majority, before we adjourn this night." Wilkes concluded by moving "that the report should be read a second time on that day three months."

Ilay Campbell, then Lord Advocate of Scotland, with great legal ability reviewed the whole series of Hastings's administration, pronouncing his exculpation or acquittal upon every point. But the in-

dividual who excited the strongest sensation was Courtenay. Eccentric, fearless, sarcastic, highly informed, always present to himself, dealing his blows on every side regardless on whom they fell, but a devoted adherent of Fox, Courtenay began by an ironical compliment to Lord Hood, "whom," he said, "no man could contemplate without reverence, when he reflected how much his country owed him for having been a spectator of Lord Rodney's glorious victory of the 12th of April 1782." Loud cries of "Order" from the Ministerial benches here interrupting him, Courtenay, without betraying the slightest agitation or discomposure, calmly maintained that his remark being complimentary to the noble Lord, on the circumstance of his having chanced to be present when Admiral Rodney defeated De Grasse, no member had any right to accuse him as disorderly on the present occasion. Then turning towards Wilkes, who sat next to him, "The worthy alderman," continued he, "possesses more sense than to feel anger when I mean him a compliment, as I do, when I assert that his country owes him great obligations for having at one period of his life diffused a spirit of liberty throughout the general mass of the people, unexampled—except, indeed, in the times of Jack Cade and Wat Tyler." The cry of "Order," that had been so violent only a minute before, was lost in the universal burst of laughter which followed this observation. "The honourable magistrate," said Courtenay, "has defended Mr. Hastings's treatment of the Begums by asserting that those Princesses were engaged in rebellion. Surely he must have looked upon the transaction obliquely,<sup>1</sup> or he never could have formed so erroneous an idea. Two old women in

<sup>1</sup> Referring to Wilkes's well-known squint.—ED.

rebellion against the Governor-General! Impossible! Nor would the worthy alderman have made an 'Essay on Woman' in the manner that Mr. Hastings did. The House well knows he would not."

No person rising to interrupt him, though the humour of this last observation was lost in its superior indecency, Courtenay next attacked the Lord Advocate. Having compared Hastings to the execrated Colonel Kirk, so well known under the reign of James II., "I have heard," continued he, "parallels drawn in the course of preceding debates between the late Governor-General and various persons illustrious for their exploits. Verres, Alexander, Scipio, and Epaminondas have been successively named. I shall look to modern ages for my comparison. Ferdinand Cortez is my model. He being sent out to South America for the purpose of instructing, murdering, and baptizing the uninformed Indians, marked his footsteps with blood and cruelty. His conduct exciting abhorrence; an inquiry was at length instituted with a view of bringing him to justice. But Cortez, aware of his danger, took care to transmit some jewels to his sovereign. Not, I believe, a bulse, for that is an Oriental term, but a present of precious stones, which produced an equal effect on the Spanish monarch's mind, all mouths rehearsing the praises of Ferdinand Cortez." Such were the leading points of Courtenay's speech, a speech which, as far as my parliamentary experience warrants me in asserting, stands alone in the annals of the House of Commons, exhibiting a violation of every form or principle which has always been held sacred within those walls. The insult offered to Lord Hood at its commencement became eclipsed in the studied indecorum of the allusions that followed, reflecting

on the personal infirmities or on the licentious productions of the member for Middlesex. His invectives against Hastings, however violent, might seem to derive some justification from the examples held out by Burke, Sheridan, and Francis; but the insinuation levelled at the King, with which Courtenay concluded, and the mention of the bulse, unquestionably demanded the interference of the chair.

The chastisement which he did not receive either from the Speaker or from the general indignation of the assembly was nevertheless inflicted on him by one of its members, Alderman Townsend.<sup>1</sup> He had succeeded to Dunning's vacant seat, the Marquis of Lansdowne bringing him into Parliament for the borough of Calne; and though he seldom mingled in debate, he manifested, whenever he spoke, a manly mind, great facility of expression, strong sense, combined with upright principles of action. "I do not rise," exclaimed he, "to retail jokes, and still less do I intrude myself for the purpose of using terms so indecent that they ought not to be tolerated in any place where regard is paid to decorum; but I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment that you, Mr. Speaker, should have allowed a member of this House to continue unchecked, and not have informed him that such language is most unbecoming." Then adverting to the proceedings against Hastings, "In the early stages of the present impeachment," continued he, "I pointed out the absurdity of our carrying articles to the bar of the other House which would be thrown back in our faces, as being unsupported by any sort of proof, resting merely on declamation, and incapable of being established by evidence. I have patiently attended the series of charges, but have not heard one of them satisfactorily proved. If, therefore, we

<sup>1</sup> James Townsend, Lord Mayor in 1772.—ED.

proceed any further, we must inevitably fail, and the disgrace which we mean for Mr. Hastings will revert upon ourselves. Appeals have been made to our honour as well as to our justice. But what honour is gained by hunting down an individual who has deserved the thanks of his country for the most signal services? And if a sense of justice impels us, why is not restitution ordered of the money taken by Mr. Hastings and applied by him to the pressing wants of the East India Company?" Having applauded the Governor-General for his meritorious exertions in saving India, though by the sacrifice of rigid legal forms in various instances, "I recollect," added he, "the time when the present Chancellor of the Exchequer's father, with a vigour of mind that did him the highest honour, foreseeing that the French were engaged in preparations for war, sent directions to seize on a number of their merchant ships, which he publicly sold, together with their cargoes, previous to any declaration of hostilities. The act was in itself illegal, for peace still existed between England and France. Yet the kingdom resounded with applause of his conduct. But nevertheless, as the nation respected justice, the value of the vessels confiscated, as well as of their freights, was restored to the owners, though the sum exceeded £600,000."

I have accurately recorded the outline of Townsend's speech, not only because it appeared to condense a greater portion of sound intelligence than any other pronounced on that evening, but as it might be esteemed his dying opinion. He survived its delivery only a very few weeks. Jekyll<sup>1</sup> replaced him as one of the representatives for

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Jekyll, born 1750. He was a Commissioner of Lunatics, and in 1805 was appointed Solicitor-General to the Prince of Wales as Duke of Cornwall.—ED.



Calne. At this point of the debate Pitt rose, and in the course of a very long speech, exhibiting prodigious powers of mind, memory, and elocution, answered the various arguments adduced, beginning with Lord Hood, and proceeding through the series of individuals who had delivered their sentiments on the occasion. I did not less admire the lucid order which pervaded his discourse or the force of his reasoning because I totally differed from his conclusion. He still persisted in rendering the late Governor-General amenable to parliamentary inquiry, nor would Pitt listen to the proposition of weighing his great public services against his acts of power. As little could he be induced to consider the East India Directors, whose orders Hastings was bound to obey, and who had expressed the utmost satisfaction at his proceedings, as alone culpable or just objects of prosecution. After having enumerated his offences, at the head of which Pitt placed his treatment of the Princesses of Oude as the most criminal, he finished by declaring that "the House could not, without abandoning their own honour, the duty which they owed their country, and the ends of public justice, fail in sending up the impeachment to the bar of the peers."

Throughout this most able effort of eloquence and talent the Minister nevertheless carefully avoided touching on two points, both of which had been forcibly stated by Alderman Townsend. The first—namely, a restitution of the sums of money extracted from Cheyt Sing, from the Begums, and other princes of Asia—Pitt well knew could not be, or at least never would be, made by Parliament. Yet, if their seizure was an act of despotic violence and injustice, with what consistency could the House impeach the plunderer

but retain the plunder? Martin, member for Tewkesbury, who always voted conscientiously, deeply impressed with the conviction, after avowing himself a friend to the impeachment, added, "If any member will move that a retribution shall be made to those persons in India from whom sums of money have been forced, I will second the motion." But not a man was found in the assembly to accept the proposition. Burke and Pitt were both satisfied to punish the offender without restoring a rupee of the many millions that he had poured into the Company's treasury, by which India was preserved. It forms, nevertheless, matter of regret that such a motion did never actually take place, as it must have unmasked the supporters of the prosecution, and have demonstrated that other motives besides the mere love of justice and abhorrence of crime animated their exertions.

The other subject to which Pitt never alluded on that night was the act of his father in seizing the French merchant ships previous to the commencement of war in 1756, the beneficial consequences of which measure in a national point of view were universally recognised, though it would have required a more able casuist than ever yet existed to reconcile it with the laws of nations or with a strict observance of our public faith. There seemed to be a strong analogy between it and various features of Hastings's administration, where the preservation of the countries intrusted to his care obliterated every minor consideration. Major Scott, when alluding to the arbitrary treatment of the Princesses of Oude and of other individuals, exclaimed, "No man can entertain a doubt of the pressing necessities of the Bengal Government at the time when Mr. Hastings authorised the seizure of the Begums' treasures.

We had five armies in the field, each many months in arrear. The state of the Carnatic was desperate. Not a rupee in the treasury. A French fleet and army hourly expected, while the Company's existence could only be preserved by the most vigorous measures. I hope, Mr. Speaker, I am neither a ruffian nor a robber. But I protest, such were the circumstances, that in my opinion a Governor-General would have been justified in plundering a mosque or in rifling a zenana!" "That the Begums had afforded assistance to Cheyt Sing," continued Scott, "was matter of public notoriety. I have conversed with nearly thirty gentlemen, all of whom will depose to the fact at the bar of the other House. It will there appear in proof that we owe the preservation of India in 1782 to the seizure of those treasures. An honourable member has said that he would second a motion, let it be made by whom it would, for affording retribution to those individuals who have been injured by Mr. Hastings. Sir, if I thought as he does, I would not wait for any man to make such a motion. I would move it myself, for the British House of Commons will become infamous to all posterity, the scoff and scorn of Europe, if, after impeaching Mr. Hastings for his pretended misdeeds, they basely profit by his crimes. He is accused of accumulating for the East India Company, by acts of oppression and injustice, nine millions and a half sterling. For every shilling of this ill-acquired sum credit has been taken by the Minister who opened the Indian Budget (Dundas) only two days ago. But if the present charges are well founded, why do we not replace Cheyt Sing, who is now a fugitive, and repay him the 123 lacs of pagodas which we have taken from him? Why do we not restore to the Nabob of Oude 130 lacs, due indeed by him to us, but, of which we never could

either have obtained or enforced payment except by ~~seizing~~ on the treasures of the Begums? I think these acts wise, politic, and justifiable; but if I thought otherwise, I should conceive myself as infamous as the corregidor in 'Gil Blas,' who punished the robber for stealing a bag of doubloons, and, instead of restoring the money to its owner, appropriated it to his own use." This defence, however forcible, did not produce any answer either from the Treasury bench or from the opposite side of the assembly. The leaders of the prosecution never once spoke during the whole debate, Pitt having rendered it unnecessary by taking on himself to justify and defend the proceeding. Only eighty-nine persons, of whom I was one, supported Wilkes's motion, while 175 voted for immediately reading the report a second time.

[10th May 1787.] On the subsequent evening this great prosecution, which will unquestionably excite the wonder, if not awaken the indignation, of posterity, was brought to its consummation in the House of Commons. No discussion and scarcely any conversation respecting it took place. The articles having been adopted, Burke then moved "that Warren Hastings, Esquire, be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanours." An address transmitted from Bengal to the late Governor-General was read by a member in his place. It had been drawn up several months subsequent to Hastings's departure, couched in language of the highest respect for his character, public as well as private, and exhibited the signatures of nearly 600 officers of the British army. Not a word was uttered in reply. Frederic Montagu then moved "that Mr. Burke, in the name of the Commons, do go to the bar of the House of Lords and impeach Warren Hastings." The question being put without a dissentient voice,

Burke instantly repaired thither, attended by a great majority of the members present, where in a solemn and impressive manner he fulfilled his commission.

I know not where I can with more propriety than in this place introduce an anecdote which Sir John Macpherson has frequently related to me. Having succeeded Mr. Hastings by devolution as Governor-General, he arrived in England about three months after the impeachment of his predecessor was carried up to the House of Peers. During the autumn of the year 1788, when the trial had already proceeded during a whole session in Westminster Hall, Sir John Macpherson drove out before dinner to Caen Wood near Hampstead, in order to pay his respects to the great Earl of Mansfield. That nobleman, who only a few months earlier had resigned the office of Chief-Justice of the King's Bench, was then more than eighty-three years of age, infirm in body and sinking in health, but still retained all the freshness as well as the vigour of his intellect. "I found him," said Sir John, "sitting before the door in front of his house, and by no means free from bodily pain. He received me with the utmost politeness, and conducted me to his library, where we walked up and down; conversed with me on the leading events of the day, and at last asked me what was my opinion of Mr. Pitt. I replied that I considered him as a great Minister. 'A great Minister!' answered Lord Mansfield; 'a great young Minister you mean, Sir John. What did he intend by impeaching Mr. Hastings or suffering him to be impeached?' 'He meant,' said I, 'as I apprehend, to let justice take her course.' 'Justice, sir,' rejoined Lord Mansfield; 'pray, where did he find her? Where is she?' 'If you, my Lord,' returned I, 'do not know where to find justice, who have been dispensing her favours these

fifty years, how can any man attempt it?' 'Yes, sir,' answered he, 'that is justice between man and man. All which is thus done is well done. It is terminated. Criminal justice I can understand. But political justice, where is she? What is she? What is her colour? Sometimes she is black. Sometimes she is red too. No, Sir John, Mr. Pitt is not a great Minister. He is a great young Minister. He will live to repent allowing Mr. Hastings to be impeached. He has made a precedent which will some future day be used against himself. Mr. Pitt is only a great young Minister.'" When we reflect that within eighteen years from the period at which this conversation took place, Lord Melville beheld himself placed in the same predicament with Hastings; if we further consider how deeply Pitt was involved in, and how acutely he felt, his friend's disaster—a disaster which unquestionably combined with other causes to accelerate his own end scarcely nine months afterwards—we shall see just reason to admire the depth of Lord Mansfield's discernment. Sir John Macpherson relating the circumstance some years afterwards in a company where Lord Thurlow and he met at dinner, "You need not tell us, Sir John," observed Thurlow, with his characteristic austerity of voice and manners, "who uttered those words. Neither you nor any one else could have invented them. Lord Mansfield only could have pronounced them. He was a surprising man. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred he was right in his opinions or decisions; and when once in a hundred times he was wrong, ninety-nine men out of a hundred could not discover it. He was a wonderful man."

[*14th May 1787.*] The insinuation thrown out by Courtenay during the debate relative to Hastings's impeachment, when he denominated Lord

Hood a spectator of the naval victory gained by Rodney over De Grasse, was not of a nature to be treated with contemptuous silence. Nor could it be considered as a mere error arising from haste, a lapse of the tongue. Courtenay's character and his style of elocution, satirical, cynical, ironical, full of wit, and unrestrained by delicacy, or even by decency, forbade the supposition. In point of fact, Admiral Hood was prevented by the failure of wind from taking the same active personal share in the glorious contest of that day which fell to the commander-in-chief. He had been even obliged during a considerable time, however reluctantly, to look on while the "Formidable" encountered and captured the "Ville de Paris." But his intrepidity, skill, and distinguished services placed him in the first rank of those whom his country would have selected for her champions on the ocean. Seeing Courtenay seated opposite him near Fox, Lord Hood rose therefore, and in few words animadverted, without warmth, on the expression used, of which he desired an explanation, as it seemed to imply that he had not done his duty on the 12th of April 1782. Windham and Burke successively coming forward to Courtenay's aid, endeavoured to demonstrate that he had unintentionally used the term "spectator" instead of "participator;" and they not only united in recognitions of the Admiral's valour as well as high professional character, but they likewise joined in protesting the deep concern privately expressed to them by Courtenay himself at the act of inadvertence which he had committed. Pitt was not, however, to be so satisfied. After stating the astonishment and indignation which, he said, in common with the whole House, he felt at the bare suspicion of any imputation being thrown on his noble friend, and urging Courtenay to make that apology in public which it

appeared he had already done in private, the Chancellor of the Exchequer added, "I will give him an opportunity for once of saying whether he is serious or not. The motion which I shall submit is, first, that the vote of thanks given to Lord Hood on the memorable victory in question be read, and afterwards that it be reprinted in the votes of the present day."

An altercation now took place between Pitt and Fox, the latter not venturing to oppose the Minister's motion, which, he even said, he was ready to support, remarking at the same time that he had, when Secretary of State in 1782, moved these thanks of the House to Lord Hood. But while he conceded this point, he endeavoured to shelter Courtenay, partly as having already declared that he meant nothing derogatory to the honour of the Admiral, partly on account of the unconciliatory manner in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer pressed for a public reparation. Courtenay, during the progress of a discussion which regarded himself far more than Lord Hood, observed a pertinacious silence, though Pitt endeavoured to rouse him by the severity of his animadversions. "I did not intend," observed the Minister, "to be conciliatory in any of my remarks, because I conceived that feelings of delicacy and propriety would produce from himself the apology which his friends have already made for him."

Finding, nevertheless, that his sarcasms, however pointed, could not produce the effect of extorting a recantation from Courtenay, Pitt contented himself with putting the motion which he had announced to the vote. It passed unanimously, and was immediately followed by an adjournment. But the concession refused by Courtenay to Ministerial importunity, he made spontaneously on the following day. Rising



unexpectedly, he did ample justice to Lord Hood's public character and services, protesting that he never had designed to throw any reflection on a man who stood so deservedly high in the estimation of his country. At the moment, however, that he performed this act of reparation, he accompanied it with reflections of the bitterest description on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, he said, had precluded him from doing it by the acrimonious solicitations of the preceding evening. "Solicitations," added Courtenay, "conveyed with his usual felicity of expression and insidiousness of intention, urged with affected candour and studied plausibility." Pitt heard these ebullitions of vexation without making any reply, and the affair terminated, Courtenay having displayed as much firmness, or rather pertinacity, throughout the progress of the business, as he had shown indiscretion in its commencement.

It might have been imagined that Burke, having carried to the bar of the Upper House so many articles of impeachment against Hastings, would limit his future exertions to adducing the proofs of these asserted crimes. But precisely at this time he brought forward a new, multifarious, complex accusation, branching out into many heads, denominated "Misdemeanours committed in Oude." He said little in explanation of them, and the question being put upon the charge, it was carried without either debate or division, though not wholly without observation. "I do not mean to divide the House," said Major Scott, "because, as a friend of the late Governor-General, I wish that the charge now made may go up to the Lords, conscious as I am that, where criminality is asserted, merit will eventually appear."—"We agree, indeed, as to the distress existing in the province of Oude, but we wholly differ relative to the cause, which Mr. Hast-





*Engraved by A. Heath.*

*The Right Hon. Charles Grey  
Secretary of State and Lord Grey of Howe.*

ings's enemies think proper to attribute to him. I, who have resided in Oude, know that he foretold the destructive consequences of the system established by his colleagues, who then formed the majority in the Supreme Council. Mr. Hastings has the exclusive merit of alleviating the evils which they, not he, occasioned. I rejoice, therefore, that a charge so destitute of foundation or of common sense should pass, but as a member of Parliament, I maintain it to be wholly contrary to fact." Dempster supported Scott's assertion, declaring it altogether unworthy of the House to adopt such loose, unproved allegations as matter of impeachment. Pitt and Dundas remained, nevertheless, silent, and the report being immediately made, the article was referred to the secret committee of managers, to be by them prepared for insertion in the list of criminal charges presented at the bar of the peers.

[15th—28th May 1787.] The session which now approached its close, though it had not lasted four months, seemed likely to terminate with tranquillity, when Mr. Grey unexpectedly brought forward an inquiry relative to asserted abuses committed in the department of the post-office. The Earl of Tankerville and Lord Carteret jointly filled the employment of Postmasters-General in 1787. Disputes arising between them, the former nobleman received his dismissal. Being of an impetuous temper, and conceiving himself ill-treated by Pitt, he induced Grey, with whom he was connected by consanguinity, to espouse his cause, or rather to adopt his resentments. They were ostensibly levelled against his late colleague, whom he accused of certain official acts commonly denominated jobs, which might with justice be deemed irregular and improper, but which could hardly merit to be stigmatised as in any degree corrupt. Lord Carteret was not, however,

in fact the real object of attack. Grey, who looked higher than the post-office, directed all his censures against the Minister. Throughout the whole discussion, which continued at intervals almost down to the prorogation, Grey displayed great ability, but still greater acrimony. Towards Pitt he displayed a personal animosity which he seemed scarcely able to restrain, and which impelled him to violate the forms of the House on more than one occasion. Not content with answering the Chancellor of the Exchequer's arguments, Grey proceeded to analyse his motives, adding in a tone of defiance that "no man should dare to question the purity of those principles by which he was actuated." If, in throwing out such a menace, he hoped or expected to intimidate his antagonist, he speedily found out his error. Pitt, though his consummate judgment enabled him with singular felicity to avoid expressions necessarily productive of personal collision, yet scarcely ever receded, apologised, or betrayed any apprehension of consequences. He might rather perhaps be censured as too unbending and unaccommodating than accused of consulting his individual safety by the slightest inclination to concede, unless from the dictates of reason and conviction. His spirit always sustained and animated his eloquence. I never knew any public man who appeared more prompt to defend with the pistol whatever opinion he had uttered or assertion he had made, sometimes even contrary to the rules of debate, as Tierney experimentally proved many years subsequent to these transactions.<sup>1</sup>

"The honourable gentleman," observed Pitt, addressing his reply to Grey, "arrogates somewhat

<sup>1</sup> In 1798, when Pitt, for certain expressions used by him in the House, was challenged by Tierney. They met on Putney Heath, exchanged shots twice, and Pitt firing in the air in the third encounter, left the Heath unharmed.—ED.

too much to himself if he imagines that I shall not take the liberty of calling his motives in question as often as I am warranted in so doing by his conduct. If he wishes not to have his motives questioned, he must take care so to regulate his conduct as to render it unnecessary." Grey replying that "if any person imputed to him dishonourable principles, he knew the means to which it would become him to resort," Sheridan interposed with a view of moderating the asperity of the two parties, declaring that his friend had mistaken the Chancellor of the Exchequer's meaning. But Pitt, calmly rising a second time, repeated deliberately all that he had previously said, adding, "As to the means which the honourable member may think proper to use, it will rest with himself to determine that point." He could not treat Grey's threat with more dignified disregard. A variety of extraneous matter, which found its way into the debates that arose out of the attack upon the post-office, served to exhibit the animosity of the contending parties. Fox ventured, not indeed positively, but indirectly, to accuse the Chancellor of the Exchequer with having courted Lord North's friendship in 1782 after that nobleman's resignation. Such a charge, if it had been founded on truth, must have rendered Pitt liable to the imputation of gross insincerity, or rather of deliberate falsehood. He denied it, not with anger or indignation, but in language of energy, simplicity, and brevity, which left no doubt on the mind of any impartial man how totally destitute of reality was the accusation. "I appeal," exclaimed Pitt, "to all those persons who have witnessed my conduct ever since my first appearance in this House whether I have not invariably declared that I thought the noble lord a bad Minister, and that

I never would act with him as a member of the Cabinet. At the same time I no more believe him to have been actuated by motives of personal corruption than does the right honourable gentleman." Never was any insinuation, or rather calumny, more triumphantly repelled. Fox himself felt it to be so untenable that he did not attempt to maintain its validity.

Foiled in their effort to wound the Minister through Lord North, his assailants endeavoured to attain their object by dragging Lord Hawkesbury's name into the debate. It had, indeed, been in contemplation to appoint that nobleman joint Postmaster-General with Lord Carteret after the Earl of Tankerville's dismissal, but on the revival of the Board of Trade, which Burke's bill of reform extinguished in 1782, and which institution Pitt renewed at this time, Lord Hawkesbury was placed at its head as President. No individual in the kingdom, even his enemies admitted, could have been selected with more propriety to perform the duties of the situation. Fox, nevertheless, availing himself of a name so unpopular, in order, as he hoped, to throw an odium on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, "Can any man wonder," observed he, "that the noble Earl should have been suddenly dismissed, when it was intended to replace him by an individual against whose interest a whole Administration does not weigh a feather? I mean the First Lord of the new Board of Trade." Grey, when speaking on the same subject, made use of still more personal language. "My noble relative," said he, "has been sacrificed in order to make official arrangements for a member of the other House, who placed the Minister in his present elevation, and whose nod can dismiss him from employment." These insulting reflections, not less pointed against the King

than injurious to Pitt, made no impression on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He neither stood in awe of Jenkinson nor sustained himself by such assistance. Parliament and the country, aided by his name, character, and talents, made him Minister to George III. His opponents by their imprudence kept him in his office, even more than his own services or abilities. In his treatment of Hastings he did not hesitate to act in contradiction both to the wishes of the sovereign and of Lord Hawkesbury. So little was he "a puppet played on by invisible wires," as Fox and Burke had formerly described Lord North. Unmoved by Grey's accusations, after disproving the assertion that Lord Tankerville had been turned out in order to make room for Lord Hawkesbury, Pitt calmly added, "Gentlemen may allude as frequently as they think proper to the last-mentioned peer, so long as I am persuaded that every favour conferred on him by the crown has been fully earned by the most meritorious public services."

Burke, whose time and exertions were concentrated on the prosecution of Hastings, took no active part in Grey's inquiry, but Sheridan amply compensated for it by his indefatigable attendance and brilliant sallies. Wit constituted his never-failing weapon. Pitt, while he candidly admitted that abuses existed in the department of the post-office which demanded reform, maintained that no remissness on the part of Government retarded or prevented the application of a proper remedy. He had, in fact, for the express purpose, induced Parliament to appoint commissioners empowered to make every necessary investigation, and armed with full powers for attaining the object. Sir John Dick and Mr. Francis Baring, two men of acknowledged ability, occupied the principal seats at the Board.



The latter, who then sat in the House as member for Grampound, and whom Pitt raised to the baronetage about six years later, was not only present in his place, but took part in the debate. He possessed a head admirably organised for calculations of arithmetic or of finance, though he laboured under a defect of hearing, while Sir John Dick, retaining his faculties undiminished, was yet far advanced in life. They had already examined various of the public offices, had reported on their state, had detected many abuses, and in the course of their labours it was known that they would speedily arrive at the post-office. All these circumstances were fully exposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as constituting his best exculpation against Grey's attack. But Sheridan, with great ingenuity, endeavoured to prove that the commissioners were utterly incompetent to the execution of their trust. "It appears, indeed," added he, "that the Minister voluntarily surrendered his understanding when he brought in the bill by which they were appointed, and determined thenceforward to see only with the eyes of Sir John Dick, and to hear only with the ears of Mr. Baring." The effect of this allusion received no slight augmentation from the presence of Baring himself, who, though seated near Sheridan, did not hear it, till the peals of laughter which it occasioned conveyed to him the information.

Sheridan's triumph did not, however, extend beyond the risible faculties of his audience. Pitt suffered no depreciation in the opinion of the House or of the public. Fox himself, while he strongly supported Grey, secretly disapproved of the whole proceeding. He felt that such petty heads of accusation were unworthy the serious notice of Parliament, and could not form grave matter of criminal inquiry against Ministers. He neither attempted to

conceal that he so thought, nor did he hesitate to declare that, though he should vote for the question, he had not recommended bringing it forward, because he did not consider it to be of a size proportioned to Mr. Grey's character and his importance in that assembly. On Lord Hawkesbury he exhausted the utmost severity of animadversion. "This day," exclaimed he, "is the first on which the Minister has publicly panegyrised the noble Lord's merits. In the hour of contest his name was studiously concealed. But I deny his title to applause. If we except those parts of his conduct which he himself has uniformly disclaimed and disavowed, but which we know to be true, his public life exhibits as few acts of meritorious service as any individual throughout the King's dominions." This censure has always appeared to me severe, for though we may readily admit that Jenkinson's talents alone, if they had been unaided by Lord Bute's patronage, and subsequently by royal favour, would not probably have elevated him to the British peerage, and though he was, during many years, one of the most unpopular or obnoxious subjects in either House of Parliament, yet his extensive information, application to business, deep knowledge of commercial affairs, and laborious researches on every topic connected with national wealth or revenue, placed him very high in the list of practical statesmen.<sup>1</sup> Eden, who possessed similar endowments, and who was only a baronet's younger son, yet made his way up to the House of Peers as well as Jenkinson. Grey's motion, which rather implied than expressed a censure on Administration for not having reformed the abuses in the post-office, was

<sup>1</sup> His "Treatise on the Coin of the Realm" was first published in 1805, and was reprinted under the auspices of the Bank of England in 1880.—ED.

extinguished without coming to a division. The whole inquiry manifested more spleen, if not enmity, than it exhibited any real ground of accusation, and Grey's eloquence excited greater admiration than either his display of judgment or command of temper.

[*21st—24th May 1787.*] The Prince of Wales's pecuniary embarrassments, which when first agitated had occasioned so much acrimonious discussion, terminated with an expression of general consent amidst testimonies of universal satisfaction. Not an allusion was made either by Rolle or from any other quarter to the lady who formed the object of his attachment. A royal message having been sent expressive of his Majesty's very great concern at the debt incurred by his son, of which the particulars were laid on the table, a most loyal address followed without a dissentient voice. Pitt alone spoke, neither Fox nor Sheridan uttering a word. His Royal Highness consented to adopt a system of payment which, it was asserted, would effectually prevent the accumulation of new encumbrances. The Minister, on his part, expressed a confident hope that no severe scrutiny would be made into the nature of the account presented, "as the circumstance itself could never occur a second time." Finally, the King consented and directed that £10,000 a year should be paid to the heir-apparent, in addition to his preceding allowance of £50,000. But as this augmentation of income, though it might enable him to subsist without incurring new debts, could not possibly discharge those already contracted, two sums were voted for the express purpose. The first, amounting to £161,000, was destined to pay the Prince's numerous creditors: £20,000 were ordered to be issued on account of the works carrying on at Carlton

House, the architectural embellishments of which edifice, it was understood, would swallow up more than double that sum before they could be completed.

Ample as the aggregate donation might be considered, it was not in any degree commensurate with the Prince's wants, nor did it satisfy the expectations of his adherents. They wished to procure for him a much larger income from Parliament. Four years earlier, in 1783, when Fox filled the office of Secretary of State, he did not hesitate to declare, speaking from the Treasury bench officially, that he would have made the annual allowance to the heir-apparent £100,000 if his Majesty would have consented. The relief extended to the Prince on the present occasion produced in fact no permanent benefit. His Royal Highness resumed indeed for a time his household and officers of state, but as no system or principles of economy pervaded his general mode of life, while his embarrassments rapidly accumulated, in the course of a few years the interposition and aid of Parliament became again necessary (notwithstanding the Minister's assurances to the contrary) for his extrication.

Among the persons of high rank whom the Prince of Wales distinguished by his particular intimacy at this period, and in whose society he passed many of his hours, may be enumerated my friends the Earl and Countess of Clermont. They were both in the decline of life. I have scarcely ever known a man more fitted for a companion of kings and queens than was Lord Clermont. Nature had formed his person in an elegant mould, uniting delicacy of configuration with the utmost bodily activity, the soundest constitution, and uninterrupted health. When he was near sixty-five, while on a shooting party—I think in Norfolk—the Prince of Wales,

who was one of the company, had the misfortune to wound him with small shot in several places. Lord Clermont suffered, however, only a short temporary confinement in consequence of the accident. His Royal Highness not long afterwards made him a gentleman of the bedchamber. His manners, easy, quiet, calm, yet lively and ingratiating, never varied. Endowed with great suavity and equality of temper, possessing a very ample fortune, almost a stranger to bodily indisposition, and having no issue male or female, he enjoyed every hour of human life. Descended from a branch of the ancient and noble family of Fortescue, he had been successively raised to the Irish dignities of a baron, viscount, and earl. Such was his passion for the turf, that when menaced by his father to be disinherited if he did not quit Newmarket, he refused, preferring rather to incur the severest effects of paternal indignation than to renounce his favourite amusement. His understanding was of the common order, but though his whole life had been passed in the sports of the field or among jockeys, yet he wanted not refinement, and he used to shelter himself under Horace's

*"Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum,"*

when justifying his ardour for races. Having mixed in the highest circles during nearly fifty years, both in this country and on the Continent, he had collected much original as well as curious information.

Inhabiting as Lord Clermont did a splendid house in Berkeley Square, maintaining a table at once delicate and luxurious, choice in the selection of his wines and in every accompaniment of taste or opulence, the Prince of Wales used frequently to make one of the number of his guests. He enjoyed, indeed, the privilege of sending at his plea-

sure to Lord Clermont, of commanding a dinner and naming the persons to be invited of both sexes, a permission of which his Royal Highness often availed himself. Notwithstanding so close a connection as he maintained with the heir-apparent, yet few noblemen were better received at St. James's, and scarcely any were detained a longer time in conversation with his Majesty whenever he appeared at the drawing-room. Nor was he less acceptable at the court of Versailles, where he and Lady Clermont repaired almost every year, and where they were admitted to all the parties made by the Duchess de Polignac for the amusement of the Queen. The very title of Clermont, which he assumed when raised to the peerage—and which might be esteemed factitious, as no such place, I believe, existed in Ireland—assimilated him to the blood-royal of France, a younger branch of the illustrious line of Condé having been denominated Comtes de Clermont. Probably he was not oblivious of this fact in his selection of the title.

When about eighty-four he breathed his last in September 1806 at Brighthelmstone, scarcely a fortnight after Charles Fox expired at Chiswick. They always lived much together, especially during the autumnal season, as Fox usually visited Norfolk in order to enjoy the amusement of shooting among his friends. Lord Clermont possessed a seat in that part of the kingdom for the same purpose. I well remember an extraordinary bet which he made with Fox and Lord Foley for a hundred guineas, namely, that he would find a heifer which should eat twenty stone of turnips in twenty-four hours. He won the wager. I said that he breathed his last at eighty-four, an expression peculiarly fitted to express the mode of his death; for he was carried off by no specific disease, nor suffered

any pain unless it were intellectual. An augmenting weakness and extenuation, which left undiminished all his faculties, senses, and powers of conversation, gently conveyed, or rather wafted him out of life. I was accustomed very frequently to dine with him, in a small society of select friends, till within five or six weeks of his decease, and though then evidently wasting away, yet at table he soon became animated. Even his memory remained fresh, and he bore no resemblance to Swift's *Struldbrugs*.

The Countess of Clermont was formed, like her lord, for the atmosphere of a court. Endowed with no superior talents, though possessing a cultivated mind, her manners subdued yet exempt from servility, with an agreeable person but destitute of beauty, uniting consummate knowledge of the world to constitutional serenity of temper, she displayed almost every qualification calculated to retain as well as to acquire royal favour. The Prince of Wales professed and exhibited towards her a species of filial regard. All his notes addressed to her displayed equal affection and confidence. As Lady Clermont enjoyed so distinguished a place in Marie Antoinette's esteem, it was natural that she should endeavour to transfuse into the Prince's mind feelings of attachment and respect for the French Queen similar to those with which she was herself imbued. Making allowance for the difference of sexes, there seemed to be indeed no inconsiderable degree of resemblance between their dispositions. Both were indiscreet, unguarded, and ardent devotees of pleasure. But the Duke of Orleans, irritated at her successful opposition to the marriage of his daughter with the Count d'Artois' eldest son, had already prepossessed the Prince of Wales in her disfavour. He was accustomed to speak of

her, on the Duke's report, as a woman of licentious life, who changed her lovers according to her caprice. She, indignant at such imputations, which soon reached her, expressed herself in terms the most contemptuous respecting the heir-apparent, whom she characterised as a voluptuary enslaved by his appetites, incapable of any energetic or elevated sentiments. About this time Count Fersen, then the Swedish envoy at the court of France, who was well known to be highly acceptable to Marie Antoinette, visited London, bringing letters of introduction from the Duchess de Polignac to many persons of distinction here, and in particular for Lady Clermont. Desirous to show him the utmost attention, and to present him in the best company, soon after his arrival she conducted him in her own carriage to Lady William Gordon's assembly in Piccadilly, one of the most distinguished in the metropolis. She had scarcely entered the room, and made Count Fersen known to the principal individuals of both sexes, when the Prince of Wales was announced. I shall recount the sequel in Lady Clermont's own words to me, only a short time subsequent to the fact.

"His Royal Highness took no notice of me on his first arrival, but in a few minutes afterwards, coming up to me, 'Pray, Lady Claremont,' said he, 'is that man whom I see here Count Fersen, the Queen's favourite?' 'The gentleman,' answered I, 'to whom your Royal Highness alludes is Count Fersen, but so far from being a favourite of the Queen, he has not yet been presented at court.' 'God d—n me!' exclaimed he, 'you don't imagine I mean my mother?' 'Sir,' I replied, 'whenever you are pleased to use the word 'queen' without any addition, I shall always understand it to mean my queen. If you speak of any other queen, I must entreat that you will be



good enough to say the Queen of France or of Spain.' The Prince made no reply, but after having walked once or twice round Count Fersen, returning to me, 'He's certainly a very handsome fellow,' observed he. 'Shall I have the honour, sir,' said I, 'to present him to you?' He instantly turned on his heel without giving me any answer, and I soon afterwards quitted Lady William Gordon's house carrying Count Fersen with me. We drove to Mrs. St. John's, only a few doors distant, who had likewise a large party on that evening. When I had introduced him to various persons there, I said to him, 'Count Fersen, I am an old woman and infirm, who always goes home to bed at eleven. You will, I hope, amuse yourself. Good-night.' Having thus done the honours as well as I could to a stranger who had been so highly recommended to me, I withdrew into the ante-chamber and sat down alone in a corner waiting for my carriage. While there the Prince came in, and I naturally expected, after his recent behaviour, that he would rather avoid than accost me. On the contrary, advancing up to me, 'What are you doing here Lady Claremont?' asked he. 'I am waiting for my coach, sir,' said I, 'in order to go home.' 'Then,' replied he, 'I will put you into it, and give you my arm down the stairs.' 'For heaven's sake, sir,' I exclaimed, 'don't attempt it! I am old, very lame, and my sight is imperfect. The consequence of your offering me your arm will be that in my anxiety not to detain your Royal Highness I shall hurry down, and probably tumble from the top of the staircase to the foot.' 'Very likely,' answered he, 'but if you tumble I shall tumble with you. Be assured, however, that I will have the pleasure of assisting you, and placing you safely in your carriage.' I saw

that he was determined to repair the rudeness with which he had treated me at Lady William Gordon's, and I therefore acquiesced. He remained with me till the coach was announced, conversed most agreeably on various topics, and as he took care of me down the stairs, enjoined me at every step not to hurry myself. Nor did he quit me when seated in the carriage, remaining uncovered on the steps of the house till it drove off from the door." I have recounted this anecdote at more length than it may seem to merit, because, trifling as are the circumstances which compose it, they prove how gracefully the Prince of Wales could redeem an error. Louis XIV. himself was not his superior in all the external attributes of a king that depend on manner, though in personal majesty and the fine bodily proportions which constitute manly dignity of form the Prince could sustain no competition with the son of Anne of Austria.

[28th May 1787.] I have already stated that Burke brought up, towards the middle of May, a new article of impeachment against Hastings, denominated "Misdemeanours in Oude." Before the session closed he reproduced this charge, multiplied by the committee into twelve separate heads of accusation. The House was altogether ignorant of their nature or import. They were nevertheless immediately adopted, without discussion of any kind. Major Scott did not, however, allow them to pass without a severe though ineffectual animadversion. "I will venture to assert," said he, "that not ten members of this assembly have read the articles, as they were not printed before the hour of one on the present day. We are, therefore, now about to proceed to the most solemn judicial act which we can execute with-

out knowing one word about the matter. If gentlemen would only peruse these charges, they never could declare seriously at the bar of the other House that they, in behalf of themselves and of the Commons of England, present such trash as articles of impeachment. I am told that I ought to have made my opposition three days ago, when these charges were virtually though not formally voted; but if so, what, in heaven's name, did we mean by ordering them to be printed? I have performed my duty, Mr. Speaker, in exposing so disgraceful a proceeding. Since, however, it is thought consistent with our dignity thus to proceed, I will not divide the House upon it." This appeal produced no effect. Neither Pitt nor Burke made any reply, and the charges were unanimously adopted. Two days afterwards, on the 30th of May, the prorogation of Parliament took place, his Majesty noticing with sentiments of deep concern, in his speech on the occasion, the dissensions which unhappily prevailed among the states of the Dutch United Provinces. They were indeed of the most alarming description, threatening, among other calamitous consequences, the immediate subversion of the treaty of commerce recently concluded between France and England.

[*October 1787.*] In the autumn died, at Dublin, the Duke of Rutland, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, not having attained the age of thirty-four. Though he neither displayed any eminent talents or virtues, yet various circumstances conduced to give him political importance at this period of the reign of George III., or, more properly, of Pitt's Administration. His father, the celebrated Marquis of Granby, notwithstanding the attack made on him by "Junius," and the greater misfortune which he underwent of

being defended by Sir William Draper, left behind him a name dear to Englishmen. His courage, the affability of his manners, the hospitalities of his table, and the generosity of his disposition justly acquired him universal popularity. To the Duke of Rutland Pitt had owed his first entrance into the House of Commons, and from attachment to the new Minister whom he had conduced to elevate, more than from inclination, it was supposed that he accepted the government of Ireland in the spring of the year 1784. Never was Viceroy more formed to conciliate affection throughout that convivial kingdom. Splendid in his establishment, his table presented every delicacy which luxury could accumulate or display. Vessels laden with fruit and other expensive productions of England came over by his direction weekly to Dublin during the whole period of his viceroyalty. He participated largely in the festivities which he encouraged, and, like the younger Cyrus in antiquity, who, when writing to the Spartans, boasted his ability to swallow more wine without being intoxicated than his elder brother could do, the Duke might have challenged a similar superiority over most of his guests.

Play, which divided with wine his evenings, had impaired his ample fortune previous to his visiting Ireland. Nor, though united by marriage to the most beautiful woman in England, was he insensible to the seductions of beauty in others. A syren of that period, the magic of whose voice was at least equalled by her personal attractions—I mean Mrs. Billington<sup>1</sup>—held him for some time in her chains. Excesses of various kinds precipitated his end. A short time before his decease he quitted Dublin in

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Wechsel, married (1) to John Billington, (2) to M. de Feliscent or Florescent, a French officer. She was born about the year 1765, and died at her estate near Venice, 25th August 1818.  
—ED.

order to make a progress through various parts of the island, being entertained on his way at the seats of the nobility and gentry. During the course of this tour he invariably began the day by eating at breakfast six or seven turkey's eggs as an accompaniment to tea or coffee. He then rode forty and sometimes fifty miles, dined at six or seven o'clock, after which he drank very freely, and concluded by sitting up to a late hour, always supping before he retired to rest. On his return to Dublin he was seized, as might have been anticipated, with a fever of so violent a nature as to baffle all medical skill. The Duchess of Rutland, whose health was likewise considerably impaired by the dissipation of a winter passed in the Irish capital, had visited England for the purpose of consulting Warren, then the most eminent physician in London.<sup>1</sup> While living in great seclusion at her mother the Duchess-Dowager of Beaufort's house in Berkeley Square, intelligence arrived of the Duke her husband's dangerous, if not desperate situation. She immediately prepared to join him, and Warren actually set out for the purpose. But before he could reach Bangor on his way to Holyhead, he received information that the Duke was no more, his blood having become so highly inflamed as to render ineffectual all the remedies administered for his relief.

The Marquis of Buckingham, who had already filled the office of Lord-Lieutenant under the Earl of Shelburne's Administration, was again selected for the same employment. He possessed far superior ability as well as greater application to business than his predecessor, but these qualities formed no compensation for the festivities to which the Irish had been accustomed under their late ruler. Temperance invariably presided at the repasts of the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Richard Warren.—ED.

Marquis. Mr. Fitzherbert, whose diplomatic talents had been employed at Paris during the negotiations which preceded the peace of 1783, replaced Mr. Orde as Secretary for Ireland. Like Orde, Fitzherbert has attained the British peerage, an elevation which he has reached less by eminent ability or distinguished services while resident as Minister at Petersburg or at Madrid than in consequence of his consummate prudence, accompanied with cautious, guarded, quiet, polished manners. These qualities have associated him to the private hours and recreations of Buckingham House. Scarcely any individual about the court during the last twenty years has been admitted to such habits of intimate communication with the King and Queen as Lord St. Helen's. Even down to the month of May 1818, when her late Majesty's augmenting maladies incapacitated her for any longer receiving a numerous company, he never failed to form one of her select evening party.<sup>1</sup> I have always inclined to consider Lord St. Helen's as superior in intellect to any of the chosen few constantly received at the Queen's House or at Windsor. The late Earl of Cardigan, the present Earl of Arran, Lord Henley, and Mr. Arthur Stanhope, who participated the distinction, could enter into no competition with him. Lord Walsingham might indeed be regarded as his equal in mental endowments and of manners alike subdued. The persons whom I have enumerated were among the principal courtiers admitted to the card-table of Charlotte of Mecklenburg. Similar qualifications recommended the ladies who enjoyed that distinction. At their head might be placed Mrs. Howe, who, when near fourscore, obeyed the sum-

<sup>1</sup> Queen Charlotte, down to a late period of her life, frequently distinguished her favoured friend, Lord James Murray, father of the present Duke of Athol, by taking tea with him at his cottage at Datchet.  
—D.

mons with the alacrity of youth on the very shortest notice. She enjoyed the privilege of expressing her opinion without reserve, and was always treated by the King with extraordinary familiarity—more, indeed, as a relative than as a common visitant. Mrs. Howe, who was a grand-daughter of George I., continued to wear the female costume of his reign at the close of the eighteenth century, and her figure, cast in a Westphalian mould, baffled all description.

I return to the Duke, or rather to the Duchess of Rutland. It is not sufficient merely to say that she was the most beautiful woman in the kingdom of high rank. Her person, in symmetry, elegance, and dignity, outstripped all rivalry. Grace itself formed her limbs and accompanied her movements. She was tall, of a just height ; slender, yet by no means thin ; combining in her figure the variety of points that Apelles is supposed to have sought throughout Greece. I have conversed with a lady who had seen her, not indeed in the state that Paris beheld the goddesses on Mount Ida, but so much undressed that the description reminded me of Thomson's Musidora. She assured me that no words could convey an adequate idea of Lady Mary Somerset's formation, for it happened previous to her marriage. Her features were noble yet delicate, and the Plantagenets could not have been represented by a more faultless sample of female loveliness. In this description there is neither partiality nor exaggeration. In truth, I never contemplated her except as an enchanting statue, formed to excite admiration rather than to awaken love, this superb production of Nature not being lighted up by corresponding mental attractions. She wanted the smiles, the amenity, the animation, the intelligence, the sweetness of the Duchess of Devonshire. She equally wanted the irresistible seduction and fascination of

the Countess of Jersey. A woman of such pre-eminent charms, married to a man whose affections and time she divided with three rivals—wine, play, and women—could not, however, want admirers. They sprang up, as Pope says of Lady Mary Wortley, wherever she turned her eyes. The Duke took umbrage at it occasionally, notwithstanding his constitutional apathy, and her coquetry or levity had produced so much inquietude in his mind that it is said they parted on terms not the most affectionate when she embarked for England. Anxious to withdraw him from the company with whom he was engaged at table on a certain evening at the Castle, the Duchess had ventured to approach the window of the apartment, and tapped at it with her fingers. But he resented the interference in the same manner that Northerton does the affront of Tom Jones.<sup>1</sup> His decease operated, however, like Captain Blifil's in the same novel, as "an infallible recipe for recovering the lost affections of a wife." The Duchess, after a period of grief and retirement, reappeared with augmented attractions. I never saw her more beautiful than in the winter of 1788. Notwithstanding the power of her charms and the number of her followers, the Duchess has never contracted a second marriage, and she still retains nearly as much beauty as Diana de Poitiers did, if we may believe Brantôme, at the same period of life.

Whatever sterility pervades our internal history

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the scene in which Ensign Northerton egregiously slanders the character of Sophia Western. Tom Jones, turning to the ensign with a stern aspect, says, "Pray, sir, choose some other subject for your wit, for I promise you I will bear no jesting with this lady's character." "Jesting," cries the other, "d— me if ever I was more earnest in my life." "Then I must tell you in earnest," cries Jones, "that you are one of the most impudent rascals upon earth." He had no sooner spoken these words than the ensign, together with a volley of curses, discharged a bottle full at the head of Jones, which, hitting him a little above the right temple, brought him instantly to the ground.—Book vii. chap. xii.—ED.



during the long interval which elapsed between the prorogation of Parliament and its meeting again for the dispatch of business is amply compensated by the magnitude and importance of the transactions that took place in the surrounding Continental states. I passed part of the autumn in Paris, where the utmost effervescence, not unmingled with gloomy apprehensions of futurity, began already to diffuse their influence over society. Never, perhaps, at any period of the French history did the throne require to have been filled by a prince of vigour and determination more than in 1787. Unhappily Louis XVI. wanted those qualities, but, while Vergennes survived, the defects of his character were concealed from view. The death of that Minister, followed as it was by the dismissal and disgrace of Calonne, plunged the crown into embarrassments of the most complicated nature. The Archbishop of Toulouse proved himself wholly incapable of restoring confidence or of retrieving the disorder in the finances, and the Parliament of Paris, openly sustained by the Duke of Orleans, increased the public confusion by pertinaciously refusing to register the new taxes. Such a state of affairs, which demanded equal wisdom and firmness in the sovereign, was rendered more critical from the peculiar circumstances of the time. The seven United Provinces, where France had established a predominant influence on the ruins of the Stadtholder's authority, loudly invoked the protection of the court of Versailles. William V., Prince of Orange, whose incapacity and weakness had nearly annihilated the power so long exercised by his family over the republic of Holland, looked for support to England and to Prussia. While the great Frederick filled the throne of the latter kingdom, though he interfered by his good offices, and even by his remon-

stances, in favour of the Stadtholder, yet he steadily withheld any military interference. His advanced age and infirmities, the faint interest which he felt in the fortunes of his niece, the Princess of Orange, his predilection for France, and his estrangement from Great Britain, whose alliance he never sought, except from overruling necessity, during his whole reign,—these motives prevented him from interposing by force to check the progress of the republican party.

But his nephew, Frederick William II., beheld with very different emotions the insult offered to his sister, who was arrested in her own carriage by a party of Dutch cavalry while quietly proceeding from Nimeguen to the Hague, detained, and treated with great personal indignity. Having concerted with the English Ministers his plan of operations, he did not hesitate to march an army into Holland under the command of the Duke of Brunswick, so renowned in "The Seven Years' War," who advanced rapidly towards Amsterdam. The measure was bold, perhaps rash. Neither Philip II. nor Louis XIV., the two most powerful sovereigns who have appeared in modern Europe, if we except Napoleon, could achieve the conquest of that province, though undertaken by each with an overwhelming force. Yet Frederick William succeeded in the attempt. If Vergennes had survived, it might nevertheless have had a different issue, and Europe might have presented another history. Louis XVI. wanted not the inclination to support his party with all the power of the French monarchy. He even made demonstrations of opposing the Prussians, assembled a considerable body of troops on the frontier not far from Liège, menaced the courts of Berlin and of London with immediate interference if they did not desist, issued orders to equip

a fleet at Brest, as Pitt had already done at Portsmouth, and performed every act announcing hostility except actually commencing war. But the internal weakness and financial distress of France prevented the sword from being unsheathed. The combined powers proceeded, and the Duke of Brunswick, notwithstanding all the impediments presented by the nature of the country, as well as by the resistance of the inhabitants, finally entered Amsterdam. Holland was subdued, the Stadtholder replaced, and the party attached to the House of Bourbon overturned, while Louis, unable to extend assistance, looked on with reluctant acquiescence. So low had that sovereign sunk, who, not five years earlier, had almost dictated terms of peace to England after dis severing thirteen colonies from the British empire, and compelling the restitution to Spain of Minorca and the Floridas. Pitt rose proportionately in the scale of European estimation. His friends already boasted, rather prematurely, that he was not merely a great Minister of finance, but, like his father, a statesman formed to wield and to direct with decisive skill the national energies in time of war. Even his enemies were silent or joined the general applause. Such were the fortunate though temporary results of the Prussian invasion of Holland.

Nor did the Austrian Low Countries exhibit, during the summer and autumn of 1787, events less important than the two neighbouring states. The inhabitants of those rich maritime provinces, though they no longer possessed the flourishing manufactures nor the extensive commerce which they carried on under the Burgundian princes more than three centuries earlier, yet still retained an enthusiastic love of freedom. Having been ceded by the treaties of Utrecht and of Rad-

stadt to the German branch of the House of Austria, they had remained nearly seventy years under the mild control of the Emperor Charles VI. and his daughter Maria Theresa. Both those sovereigns wisely respected the privileges of a people whose geographical position in Europe and whose distance from the seat of government enabled them not only to resist any act of despotism, but to invoke the aid of England or of France against oppression. Unrestrained by considerations which would have deterred a more prudent prince, Joseph II. undertook to coerce the Flemings and to extinguish their civil liberties. An attempt, in itself so unjust, he began at a period when he had already connected himself by the closest ties of policy with Catherine II., when he had accompanied her on a progress to the Crimea, and had secretly agreed, in concert with the Russian Empress, to commence war upon the Turks. Joseph, who anticipated the conquest of the Ottoman provinces lying on the Lower Danube, meditated to reduce into a similar state of vassalage his subjects of Brabant and of Flanders. Previous to her decease, his mother, Maria Theresa, had intrusted the administration of the Netherlands after the death of Prince Charles of Lorraine to her favourite daughter, the Archduchess Christina, a princess who to great personal beauty added much activity of character. With her was joined her husband, Duke Albert of Saxony, youngest of the sons of Augustus III., King of Poland. Under their temperate rule, notwithstanding the innovations of various kinds made by the Emperor, their new sovereign in ecclesiastical as well as in civil affairs, yet down to the close of 1786 no symptoms of insurrection manifested themselves throughout the Low Countries.

Joseph (whose whole reign of more than nine years formed a perpetual series of rash experiments, dictated indeed, we must admit, in many instances, by benevolent or enlarged principles of action, but tintured in all with the spirit of arbitrary power) well knew that his sister and Duke Albert would not without extreme reluctance carry into execution his violent decrees. He therefore made choice of another instrument for the purpose, and the individual whom he selected was not a native of Germany, but an Italian. Count Belgiojoso, whom I personally knew, possessed many qualities which might justify the Emperor's preference. His manners were noble, his talents considerable, and though he loved pleasure, he could devote himself to business. A Milanese by birth, he would probably have governed that beautiful province, if it had been committed to him, equally for the benefit of his sovereign and of the people subjected to his authority. But Belgiojoso was misplaced at Brussels. His residence of several years in England while Austrian envoy at the court of London had not impressed him with ideas favourable to liberty. On the contrary, he appeared to have imbibed from Lord George Gordon's riots in 1780, which scenes of outrage he witnessed, a strong prejudice against popular rights. As early as 1784 Joseph appointed him to the office of First Minister of the Low Countries, but without recalling the Archduchess and Duke Albert, whom, more in compliance with his mother Maria Theresa's last injunctions than either from affection or inclination, he still allowed to retain their situations. The supreme power did not the less reside exclusively in Belgiojoso—a fact of which the Flemings were well apprised. Under his administration, every measure of which emanated from Vienna, their affections were alienated, all their

national prejudices shocked, their most ancient customs abolished by edict, and the political constitution, to maintain which inviolate Joseph had sworn at his accession, was treated with disregard. Nor were instances of military violence wanting, which, though they might have inspired submission in Transylvania or in Croatia, were calculated to excite indignation and resistance among the Flemings. Such was the position of affairs when Joseph, returning from Cherson, prepared to commence military operations against the Ottoman Porte.

Scarcely had he reached the Austrian capital, early in July, when intelligence arrived announcing that the states of Brabant, Flanders, and Haynault, incensed at the infraction of their charters, had suspended by their own authority all his arbitrary edicts, had refused to grant any subsidies until the grievances of which they complained were redressed, and had virtually set the imperial power at defiance. It cannot be doubted that Joseph would instantly have marched an army into the Low Countries if he had not been withheld by the engagements contracted with his ally the Empress of Russia to attack the Turks. Thus fettered, he thought proper to restrain and to postpone his resentment. Having recalled the Archduchess and Duke Albert, he likewise ordered Belgiojoso to repair to Vienna. Finally, yielding to the urgency of the occasion, he submitted to accept the assurances of duty and loyalty made by the deputies of the Flemish states, professed a disposition to restore all the rights of their violated constitution, and as the best proof of his sincerity removed Belgiojoso from his employment.

Count Trautmansdorff, a German, and a man acceptable from the moderation of his character, replaced him as Minister of the Netherlands. But

acts of grace evidently extorted, and which under more favourable circumstances might be revoked, did not induce the insurgents to disarm or to confide in the imperial professions. Without withdrawing their allegiance, they held themselves in readiness to resist oppression, while Joseph, plunging into a war with the Turks which covered his arms with dishonour, reserved his vengeance for a more propitious moment. That moment never arrived. His turbulent, ambitious career, productive of incalculable injury to the House of Austria, already verged towards its termination. Happily the conciliatory judicious conduct of his brother and successor, Leopold, pacified the discontent of the Flemings, and restored order throughout the Low Countries. Those who know that history offers a perpetual recurrence of the same events under new names will be struck with the similarity of conduct between Philip II. of Spain and Joseph II. of Austria. The same despotic, tyrannical intentions actuated both princes towards their Flemish subjects; but Joseph's principles were checked by the spirit of the eighteenth century; nor was he, like Philip, a merciless bigot. Margaret of Parma, Governess of the Netherlands under the Spanish sovereign, seems to reappear in the Archduchess Christina, as Cardinal Granvelle, Philip's Minister, revives in Count Belgiojoso. So accurate is the resemblance between the two periods. If Joseph's power and revenues had equalled those of Philip, or if his life and reign had been as long protracted, we should probably have witnessed as severe and sanguinary a conflict in our own time between the Austrian Emperor and his revolted people in Flanders as took place two hundred years earlier under the Duke of Alva and the Prince of Parma.

[27th November 1787.] Never had George III.,

during the course of seven-and-twenty years, met his Parliament under circumstances so auspicious as towards the end of November 1787. The popularity which attended his accession had speedily become obscured in consequence of his unfortunate partiality to Lord Bute, followed by the dismissal of Mr. Pitt from his councils. It underwent a still more severe eclipse at the peace of 1763, when, from causes that remain yet unexplained—for it is impossible to solve the problem by attributing it merely to Ministerial incapacity—the most valuable acquisitions of a victorious war were restored to a vanquished enemy. Wilkes and “Junius” successively attacked his measures, and laid bare the infirmities of his character or the errors of his Government. By the convention made with Spain in 1770, though we maintained possession of the object in dispute, the Falkland Islands, yet the national honour suffered from the arrogance and insolent pretensions of the court of Madrid. During the continuance of the American contest, his Majesty never opened a session without the painful necessity of disclosing some defeat, capitulation, or disgrace. Even from the peace of 1783, however meritorious as I now think Lord Shelburne may be esteemed for having negotiated that treaty under all the circumstances of our situation, yet the sovereign could not derive any source of pride or of exultation. But he could say to his Parliament on the present occasion, “I have effaced the faults and calamities of my past reign. If I have lost thirteen colonies, I have humbled the power by whose aid they were emancipated, and I have effected it without drawing the sword. England, which at the close of 1782 was reduced to solicit peace at Paris, has now resumed her rank among the European nations. I have, with the aid of Prussia, restored my ally the Stadtholder to his



ancient place at the head of the Dutch republic. France, which so lately acted as the arbitress of events, torn by intestine dissensions, distressed in her finances, destitute of able Ministers to direct her councils, has been reduced to witness my triumph and her own humiliation. Contemplating these vicissitudes, and ever looking to the Divinity for support, I may exclaim—

‘Valet ima sumis  
Mutare, et insignia adtenuat Deus,  
Obscura promens.’”

Such, in fact, if reduced to parliamentary language, was the speech delivered at the commencement of the session. His Majesty, with dignity, but void of any offensive expressions, recapitulated the leading facts which had just taken place in Holland, the insult offered to the Princess of Orange, his own co-operation with Frederick William, the menaces used by France, the rapid success that attended the Prussian troops, finally, the mutual explanations between the courts of St. James's and of Versailles, followed by disarming their respective fleets. Pitt selected to move the address an individual who has since filled various high situations in the state, and who at this hour occupies the eminent post of Lord President of the Council. I mean Mr. Ryder, afterwards Earl of Harrowby. He was then scarcely twenty-five, but his early display of talents justified the Minister's preference. A delicate constitution, precarious health, and an irritable frame of mind, have nevertheless operated throughout life to prevent his being long employed in those laborious offices of Government which demand severe or unremitting exertion. It required no extraordinary eloquence or ingenuity to justify measures which had been crowned with so triumphant a result. Mr.

Ryder, with becoming brevity, stated them to the House. Fox, who rose soon afterwards, admitted all their force, concurred in approving the principle which dictated our late interference in Continental affairs, claimed for himself the merit of having early adopted it as the uniform guide of his own political conduct, finally declaring that the substance of the address met with his sincere concurrence. While, however, he thus candidly recognised the Minister's general merit in the late transactions, he did not the less repeat his own uniform denunciation of the perfidy displayed by France in all her negotiations with foreign states. The address was carried without a dissentient voice.

Pitt had attained at this time to an almost unexampled height of Ministerial favour and popularity, but he did not remain many years in that elevation. Heavy clouds soon began to collect round him, and though they frequently seemed to disperse, yet they perpetually gathered anew, ultimately enveloping him in a dark shade, and accompanying him with aggravated gloom to the termination of his existence. I know from persons who had most frequent access to his private hours, that after 1793 down to his decease in January 1806, he scarcely enjoyed any settled tranquillity of mind either in or out of office. Devoured by ambition, accustomed to dictate his will to Parliament, and habituated to power ever since he had attained to manhood; incapable of finding consolation for the loss of public employment either in marriage or in literary researches, or in cultivating his Kentish farm, or in drilling refractory Cinque Port volunteers; embarrassed in his pecuniary circumstances, and contemplating his country engaged in a war which threatened to involve the finances, the credit, and even the independence of Great Britain in final subversion,—the

concluding thirteen years of Pitt's wonderful career present a subject of painful contemplation. Fox, if he had enjoyed a moderate independence, either hereditary or acquired, would unquestionably have formed an object of comparative envy. Inured to the privations inflicted by his acts of early imprudence, which had made him acquainted with adversity and poverty ; having scarcely tasted throughout his whole life of political power, and emulous of attaining historical fame if he could not reach Ministerial eminence,—Fox could call into action resources denied by nature to his successful rival. He might tranquilly contemplate from his retreat at St. Ann's Hill the storms that shook Downing Street and Walmer Castle. He had invariably reprobated and opposed the war commenced with revolutionary France in 1793, all the disasters and calamities of which protracted struggle served to justify to himself the line of policy which he had originally embraced and urged from the Opposition bench. If I were compelled to estimate the comparative measure of felicity enjoyed by these two illustrious statesmen during the thirteen concluding years of their residence on earth, I should not hesitate an instant to decide it in favour of Fox. But I might be tempted to exclude the short period of about eight months which he survived his great competitor, and when he may be said to have presided in the councils of George III.

[*December 1787.*] Sir Elijah Impey's impeachment forms the only important event which occurred in either House of Parliament previous to the Christmas recess. The Chief-Justice of Bengal occupies indeed nearly as conspicuous a place throughout the session of 1788 as the Governor-General fills during the two preceding years. But Impey by no means excites the same interest with

Hastings, who possessed an elevated mind, however ambitious or even despotic may have been his administration in various instances while invested with authority. Impey, rapacious if not corrupt, and rendering his high office subservient to purposes of oppression, both legal and financial, seems to have had only one object constantly in view—accumulation. The trial, condemnation, and execution of Nundcomar are inseparably connected with his name. Sir Gilbert Elliot<sup>1</sup> undertook the laborious as well as invidious task of bringing forward the charges against him—charges which he opened in a speech of no ordinary ability, well arranged, temperate, yet full of energy. It displayed, indeed, no ray of Sheridan's wit, of Fox's impassioned and persuasive oratory, or of the classic imagery which illuminated the desultory eloquence of Burke. Sir Gilbert, possessing a solid though not a brilliant understanding, and nourishing under a cold exterior a persevering, systematic ambition, has reached through successive gradations of employment to a great elevation. We have beheld him appointed Viceroy of a Mediterranean island which is become unfortunately too conspicuous in the modern history of Europe by having given birth to a man all whose vast energies were unhappily directed to purposes of conquest, spoliation, and subversion. Expelled from Corsica, Pitt sent Sir Gilbert in a diplomatic character to Vienna. He was subsequently placed at the head of the East India Board of Control, which he quitted to assume the Government-General of Bengal. On his return he was raised to the dignity of a British Earl. His father, Sir Gilbert,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Gilbert Elliot, born 23d April 1751; Envoy-Extraordinary to Vienna, 1779; Viceroy of the island of Corsica, and, on his return in 1797, created Baron Minto; President of the Board of Control in 1806; created Earl of Minto, 24th February 1813, on his return from the Governor-Generalship of Bengal.—ED.

was a man of very eminent parts. During the first sixteen years of the reign of George III. he successively filled various important posts about the court or in the state down to the period of his decease in 1777. Few individuals enjoyed a higher degree of royal favour or shared more largely in the unpopularity attached to the measures of Lord North's Administration. His name appears in the publications of that time joined with those of Jenkinson, Dyson, Bradshaw, and others, none of whom were embalmed in the affection of their contemporaries. To his son he bequeathed an ample patrimonial estate, while he laid the foundations of that son's political fortune.

Elliot having traced in a summary manner the principal features of Impey's legal career while in India, from the date of his first arrival in Calcutta in 1774 down to his recall by a vote of the House of Commons, and having severely inveighed against the acts of tyranny or of malversation which he had authorised and committed, finished by enumerating the charges brought against him. They were six in number. At their head stood Nundcomar's murder, as Elliot denominated it—a murder which, he said, had been performed in the most solemn and deliberate manner. The remaining articles accused him of scandalous corruption, notorious injustice, intentional infraction of the parliamentary powers under which he held and exercised his functions; lastly, subornation of evidence, thereby lending to falsehood the sanctity of an oath. Acts more enormous could scarcely have been attributed even to the famous Chancellor of James II. Not a word was said in Impey's defence from any part of the assembly when Sir Gilbert moved to lay his complaint on the table. But a few days afterwards, on the 18th of December, he having

proposed to refer the charges to a committee of the whole House on the 4th of the ensuing month of February, Pitt, while he assented to the motion, nevertheless observed that from the hasty perusal which he had given to the articles, he entertained strong doubts whether the inferences drawn from the alleged facts were grounded on the principles of English law. Here terminated the discussion, an adjournment immediately taking place up to the last day of January 1788 ; and with this event I shall close the "Memoirs of my Own Time" for the year 1787.

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[*January 1788.*] During the lapse of more than seventy-three years, ever since the accession of the House of Hanover, no Minister of this country, as I have already observed, had attained to the same degree of power and popularity as Pitt enjoyed at the beginning of 1788. Sir Robert Walpole, who, under two successive princes, for the space of at least twenty years had filled the first place in the councils of the crown, neither deserved nor acquired the favour of the nation. To the preservation of his employments he sacrificed the character of Parliament, where the most notorious corruption pervaded and directed every deliberation. To the preservation of peace he sacrificed the glory and the interests of his country. France between 1733 and 1735 was allowed, by his tame, selfish, pusillanimous policy, to conquer Naples for a prince of the House of Bourbon, and to incorporate Lorraine with her own dominions. However personally acceptable he might be to his two foreign royal masters, his fall was unaccompanied with any testimonies of national affection, respect, or regret. Mr. Pelham, it is true, possessed during the period of his Administration, embracing about nine years, a great share of public regard, but it was conferred rather on his

private virtues than on his talents or Ministerial services. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, concluded while he held the first place at the Treasury Board, may be justly accounted one of the least glorious which we have signed since the Peace of Ryswick. Of Mr. Pelham we may indeed say, as "Junius" does of Lord Granby, "*bonum virum facile dixeris, magnum libenter.*" The first Mr. Pitt unquestionably was idolised, and justly, by his countrymen, while his powerful mind at one and the same time coerced the Cabinet, subjected Parliament, withered Opposition, and directed with no less ability than success the energies of the nation against her foreign enemies. But he neither possessed the real confidence of George II. nor of George III., the former of whom employed him, as the latter retained him, for a short time in office, not from choice, but in reluctant deference to the universal wishes of their subjects. Nor can it be forgotten that this illustrious statesman seemed to be designed by Nature exclusively for a time of war. His talents, like those of the Corsican Emperor of the French, were adapted, not for the calm, but for the tempest.

If Mr. Pitt had not been supplanted by Lord Bute, we doubtless should have retained, at the Treaty of Fontainebleau, some of those valuable possessions in the West Indies which were restored by us to France and Spain. But it may be reasonably doubted whether the Secretary's popularity would have long sustained itself after the conclusion of peace. He was wholly unqualified to preside over the finances, of which department, during his short and triumphant career, he left the superintendence to the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Legge,<sup>1</sup> while he dictated his pleasure to the Treasury as well as to the Admiralty. His faculties, which were not

<sup>1</sup> Henry Bilson Legge, Chancellor of the Exchequer.—ED.

calculated for the meridian of Downing Street, became felt at the extremities of Asia and of America, at Belleisle, at Manilla, at Martinique, in Cuba, and in Canada. Conscious of his powers no less than of his deficiencies, he never emulated any higher ostensible office than Secretary of State. From that position his powerful mind domineered the Cabinet during about four years under two kings. Charles Fox, like the first Mr. Pitt, limited his ambition to the same employment, but not from a similar cause, for Fox, in my opinion, might have directed the finances of Great Britain with as much ability as her foreign policy and councils. His defect lay principally in the irregularities of his private life. Lord North, for the space of full twelve years, enjoyed the perfect confidence of his sovereign. Not a cloud of any magnitude arose in the closet, though during the calamitous interval between 1777 and 1782, when Lord North would more than once have willingly withdrawn from a ruinous contest, Jenkinson might receive marks of predilection or of confidence withheld from the Minister. But Lord North, as was once avowed by Dundas in the course of debate, wanted the energy and severity requisite to control his colleagues. He constituted the charm of private society. His wit, brilliant and playful, never became acrimonious. He was an accomplished orator, an able financier, irreproachable in his individual character, and fully adequate to conduct the national affairs in ordinary times. His crime was the American war. In that abyss he became ultimately engulfed.

Pitt's situation at this time bore no analogy to any of the four preceding Ministers. It is difficult to imagine what a magic there was in his name—I might say his names (baptismal as well as family



denomination)—which seemed to present his father anew before the eyes of Parliament. Neither did Fox, nor does the present Earl of Liverpool, enjoy this advantage, as, though their respective fathers were men of great intellectual endowments, I scarcely remember two more unpopular individuals than Lord Holland and Charles Jenkinson. The Chancellor of the Exchequer still wanted several months of having accomplished his twenty-ninth year. Yet he displayed none of the usual characteristic concomitants of youth. Neither women, nor play, nor the allurements of the turf, nor the exhibitions of the theatre, nor the sports of the field, nor pleasure under any form interfered with his official duties. Wine, which his constitution demanded as a stimulus, rarely led him into any excess, and the companions of his convivial hours were not numerous. His elevated, ambitious mind, which grasped at solid power, was superior to the trappings of vanity. Unlike Sir Robert Walpole and Lord North, both of whom aspired to and obtained the distinction of the Garter, Pitt desired to remain a commoner without decoration. At a subsequent period, when the King offered to confer on him that splendid ornament, he declined it, and only besought of his Majesty to bestow it on the Earl of Chatham, thus preferring the chief of his family to himself.

His magnanimous contempt of money, exemplified in giving the Clerkship of the Pells to Colonel Barré (though it was a place in the Exchequer, a department over which he personally presided, and the patronage of which belonged to him), this extraordinary act of renunciation, scarcely exceeded by the brightest models in antiquity, extorted universal applause. Negligent, however, as he was of his own interests, he manifested the utmost vigilance in pro-

tecting those of the public. Under his Administration the Government securities had risen to a height unknown since the commencement of the American war, and the institution of a sinking fund of one million had given a stability to credit which rendered him most popular on the Royal Exchange. In the management of Parliament he had hardly found it necessary as yet to have recourse to the arts of corruption. His late successful interference in the Dutch affairs, though, as he modestly owned in the House of Commons when discussing the subject, "it had turned out so fortunate for Great Britain rather from an extraordinary combination of circumstances than from any other cause," yet had raised him to an unprecedented point of general confidence. In making this recognition of Pitt's merits I am not impelled by any partiality. For Lord North and for Lord Sackville I nourished great predilection, but towards Pitt I felt none except the obligation imposed on me to write truth. In fact, I rendered him far more service than he ever rendered me.

In one point of view, and in one only, this great Minister might be said to stand on lower ground than some of his predecessors—I mean royal favour. No man can suppose that he was considered by George III. with the affectionate preference that he exhibited for the Earl of Bute. I have indeed always placed that nobleman in the list of favourites rather than of public functionaries. He ranks rather with Carr and Villiers than with the Danbys, the Godolphins, or the Harleys. Wilkes, when attacking Lord Bute, ascended to the time of Edward III. in order to find his parallel in the person of Roger Mortimer. But never did the King regard Mr. Pitt with the same warm feelings of kindness as he displayed towards Lord North, who

was naturally and constitutionally gay, facetious yet respectful, and blessed with an unalterable suavity of temper. Pitt's manners were stiff, retired, without unction or grace. On some occasions he dictated, while on others he refused to yield, even in matters painfully affecting the sovereign. It is well known that very sharp dialogues took place in the closet between them previous to 1793. After that period, when the Duke of York commanded in the Netherlands, while Lord Chatham presided at the Admiralty, altercations, accompanied by mutual recrimination, more than once arose of the most personal description. I could state particulars.

In permitting Mr. Hastings to be impeached and in supporting the prosecution, Pitt rudely shocked the King's opinions, who always esteemed the Governor-General as one of his most able, meritorious, and ill-used subjects. Perhaps Pitt is to be admired for the line of conduct that he adopted, but it could not be acceptable at St. James's. In truth, Pitt was not made to be loved. Admiration and respect followed him wherever he appeared, but not general attachment. He possessed, however, an invaluable ally in Fox, from whose power he had rescued the sovereign by exertions which he only could have successfully made, and of which service the King retained the strongest sense. He was indeed well aware that a rupture with his Minister would not only be attended by the loss of that popularity which since the close of the American war he had acquired, but must probably necessitate him to return to his former bondage under the Coalition. In the year 1801, when Pitt and his colleagues resigned, it was not Hastings, or Lord Chatham, or the Duke of York, or temporal concerns of any description that formed the matter in dispute between them. A higher subject, one which affected his coronation

oath, superseded in the King's estimation all sub-lunary political considerations. He had, besides, with great ability provided a successor for Pitt in the person of Addington, to whom he gently and dexterously transferred the Administration, leaving Fox seated where he was antecedently, on the Opposition bench.

[*4th February 1788.*] As the last discussions which took place previous to the adjournment regarded Sir Elijah Impey, so one of the earliest subjects of debate in the House of Commons when that assembly met again was his prosecution. Sir Elijah himself being permitted to appear at the bar, delivered a very able and impressive answer to the charges presented against him. The trial and execution of Nundcomar constituting the heaviest allegation, he directed his principal efforts to clear himself from the guilt commonly attached to that act. It had been generally reported and credited that Lord Mansfield, who was then justly considered as the greatest authority on all matters of criminal law, declared "the execution of Nundcomar to have been a legal murder." In order to erase the impression made by an opinion from which there could have been no appeal, Sir Elijah informed the House, that having written a letter on the subject to the nobleman in question, he had received an answer from his Lordship positively declaring that he had never used any such expression. But the Chief-Justice of the King's Bench limited himself to the bare denial, without subjoining the slightest approbation of the judicial proceedings instituted against the unfortunate Rajah. Sir Elijah likewise produced other high testimonials to his official character and conduct while at the head of the courts of judicature in Bengal, including particularly, if I recollect right, the celebrated names of Blackstone and of Dun-

ning. After having commented with great ability on the trial itself, and read the conclusion of the charge that he delivered on the occasion from the bench to the jury, which he cited as a proof of his having given the prisoner every fair chance for his life, he observed that the sentence pronounced was unanimous. "If, therefore," concluded he, "I am guilty, the other judges who presided in that court participate the criminality with me. I was, nevertheless, suffered to remain in India as Chief-Justice near six years afterwards, and the other judges still remain at this hour in Bengal, distributing justice though their hands have been dipped in blood. But is it credible that four men of unspotted reputation down to Nundcomar's conviction should at once become so depraved as to join in the commission of murder? However feeble, therefore, may be my defence, I trust that when they come to this bar, their arguments will have more force, and will sustain whatever I, in my present reply, have left weak or inadequate."

[*7th February 1788.*] These facts and arguments, which it must be admitted were not destitute of legal or of moral weight, received still further corroboration when Sir Elijah entered a second time on his defence. I knew him personally, and I always entertained strong prejudices in his disfavour—prejudices which neither the expression of his countenance nor his manners tended to dispel. Yet truth compels me to declare that certain passages in his appeal to the House of Commons reminded me of Lord Strafford's eloquent address to his judges in 1641. "Is it intended, Mr. Speaker," said he, "by accumulating articles of accusation against me, charging me exclusively with acts in which the other judges equally participated, to induce or compel me to fly my country? Do my

accusers hope that I will not come forward to refute them? Can it answer the purposes of public justice to bring against me such a mass of falsehood and of misrepresentation? I have much at stake. I have, moreover, ten children, for whose provision it is equally my duty and my wish to preserve my fortune. But I will sacrifice that fortune to the preservation of my character. No child of mine shall blush to acknowledge me for his father!" The Speaker, by order of the House, having demanded of him how soon he would be ready to reply to the remaining charges, "My mind," replied he, "is so unhinged by the imputation of having legally murdered Nundcomar, and my health is so deeply affected by such an accusation, that I find it impossible to exert myself in my defence against the other articles till a decision has taken place respecting the leading charge. It is of a deep cast, and on it I have concentrated my attention. With respect to the minor charges, I hold myself ready to answer them whenever the House shall call on me." Pitt having instantly moved to comply with Sir Elijah's request, Elliot, desirous to avoid a division which would unquestionably be carried against him, reluctantly assented to the proposition.

Violent personal altercations, nevertheless, accompanied every stage of the prosecution. Already the truth of Lord Mansfield's profound observation on the essential difference between criminal and political justice began to be fully exemplified. Eloquence might induce a legislative assembly, unrestrained in its proceedings by legal forms, to accuse a Governor-General of having committed criminal acts in his political capacity, because the crimes imputed were in themselves vague and indefinite. But in order to impeach a Chief-Justice

of having been corrupt or oppressive while sitting on the bench, it became necessary not only to adduce evidence the most formal and defined, but to follow the ordinary rules laid down in courts of law. To these fetters the prosecutors very unwillingly submitted. Impey's recent defence at the bar had produced a strong sensation in his favour, and effected a temporary revulsion in popular opinion. He enjoyed, moreover, an advantage denied to Hastings, namely, that he belonged to a learned profession, the individuals composing which body assembled round him as a sort of guard, ready to defend him against his accusers. Francis having moved to require the delivery of a paper which Sir Elijah had read in his exculpation, and the Solicitor-General opposing its forced production as subversive of every principle of justice, Francis launched out in a tone of indignant complaint. "A week ago," exclaimed he, "scarcely an individual was to be found who did not esteem Sir Elijah Impey highly criminal. On a sudden the tide is turned, and tenderness is to be manifested towards him. We behold a phalanx drawn up on the other side. Whole bands of learned counsel, even judges themselves, flock down to support him, to welcome him with cheers, and to encourage him not merely with the smiles, but with the halloo of Government."

A cry of "Order!" resounding from the Ministerial side of the House, Pitt immediately rose and observed that such language he never could hear without feelings of abhorrence. "What!" continued he, "when a person accused of charges the most flagrant stands here for the first time on his defence, is it to be asserted that no tenderness should be shown him?" Fox and Burke persisting, nevertheless, to compel the production of the document in question, the Master of the Rolls (Kenyon)

interposed. He had entered the House while Francis was on his legs, and as he advanced up the floor imperfectly heard the accusation levelled against the judges. Irascible as Kenyon was from constitution, and upright from character, he could not tamely submit to an imputation which personally affected him. "If," exclaimed he, "that honourable gentleman is really the immaculate person which his friends describe him to be, it ill befits him to charge bad intentions on other men, and, while he reprobates Sir Elijah Impey's conduct, become himself the accuser of a whole profession." Burke desiring to be informed from legal authority how far papers not proved authentic could furnish matter of proof, and what evidence would be admissible or inadmissible at the bar of the Lords, the Master of the Rolls answered that the judges would be ready to give their opinion on every point submitted to them. "Where disputes arise," continued he, "the law will be pronounced from the woolsack, and whatever is so pronounced must be regarded as law." Far from acquiescing in this doctrine, Burke utterly denied its validity. "I have," said he, "contended, and successfully contended, against the unanimous opinion of the judges. If I think their opinion wrong, I will again contend against their determination. The learned gentleman appears to me to hold their decision in much too high veneration. He is, I believe, eagerly looking to become one of that body. I hope, however, that he will continue some time longer in his present probationary state, performing legal quarantine for the advantage of his health and constitution." These allusions related to the negotiation for Kenyon's elevation to the office of Chief-Justice of the King's Bench, Lord Mansfield's age and infirmities rendering necessary his resignation. The business was not finally effec-



tuated till about four months afterwards, when Kenyon became a peer and Chief-Justice.

Francis having defended with much warmth his own conduct as a member of the Supreme Council of Bengal, concluded by making some querulous reflections on his actual situation. "I deplore," said he, "the unfortunate event of my having ever embarked for India, where I sacrificed every object to the performance of my duty; and on returning to this country, what has been my reception? Instead of receiving acknowledgments, I am made the object of party rancour." These lamentations, which, while they exhibited his own disinterestedness, reproached the public insensibility to it, did not however pass without notice. Major Scott, who accurately knew the only modes in which a large fortune could be accumulated in a short space of time on the banks of the Ganges, coming forward,—“Before,” observed he, “I can join in applauding the honourable gentleman’s integrity, I require proof of the fact itself in the only way which can produce conviction. Let him make a fair and candid declaration, as Lord Macartney has done! Let him state that he quitted England in debt a few years ago, that he remained only six years in India, that his expenses at home and abroad during the time amounted to a certain specified sum, and that his fortune is barely the difference between the amount of his expenses and the remainder of his salary as a supreme councillor. Until he gives this test of his integrity I shall set little value on the panegyrics of his friends.” Francis made no reply to Scott’s proposition, nor manifested any inclination to submit to such a disclosure. Fox persisting to require the production from Sir Elijah Impey of the paper to which allusion had been so often made, and Pitt as pertinaciously resisting it, a division ensued, when nearly three to one supported

the Minister. But Impey, on being called to the bar, and asked by the Speaker whether he had any objection to deliver in a copy of the document, replied that he would most readily present it on the ensuing day.

[13th February 1788.] While the House of Commons was thus engaged, the trial of Hastings at length commenced in Westminster Hall. It formed a very imposing and august spectacle. In that immense fabric, which carried back the mind of the spectator to the Plantagenet and Norman princes by whom it was constructed or repaired at distant periods of our history, almost all the rank and talent, as well as much of the beauty of the country were assembled. The Queen, accompanied by her four eldest daughters, distinguished it with her presence. They were seated in the Duke of Newcastle's box, who, as Auditor of the Exchequer, possessed in virtue of his office a distinguished portion of the gallery. Charles I., as well as Henrietta Maria, his consort, were present, as we know, throughout the whole trial of the Earl of Strafford, concealed in a close gallery of Westminster Hall. But George III. did not think proper to imitate the example of his predecessor. He never once visited the court before which Hastings appeared, from the commencement to the close of the judicial proceedings, though they were protracted during successive years. The Prince of Wales, on the contrary, closely connected as he was with all the chiefs of Opposition, lent his countenance to the prosecution by walking at the head of the peers, to the number of more than 150. The whole British peerage did not at that time exceed 220, while they now fall little short of 300.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding all the pre-

<sup>1</sup> The present number (1883) of the House of Peers is 509, which number includes 6 princes of the blood, 2 archbishops, 24 bishops, 16

cautions used for warming the hall, a cold damp vapour, augmented by the gloom of the season, pervaded the edifice. In the midst of this vast assembly the late Governor-General of India presented himself, accompanied or followed by his counsel, Law, Plumer, and Dallas. Erskine, who, ten years earlier, had first attracted public attention by his defence of Admiral Keppel, might have been retained on the present occasion. Never, perhaps, had a more ample subject presented itself for the display of that impassioned, nervous, and glowing appeal to the human mind which characterised Erskine's oratory. But his personal habits of private as well as of political friendship with Fox and the other leaders of the prosecution induced him to decline the office of Hastings's advocate.

Precluded from availing himself of such assistance, Hastings made the best selection then permitted by the state of the bar. Law,<sup>1</sup> who has since risen to the distinguished employment successively filled before him by the Earl of Mansfield and Lord Kenyon, possessed eminent abilities. But he wanted the refinement of Erskine, who, though driven by necessity to seek support from his exertions as a barrister, never forgot that he was a gentleman and a man of quality. Law, on the contrary, when elevated to the peerage, retained and exhibited all the coarse breeding of his natural character and habits. Not less irascible than Kenyon, he was far more intractable. Kenyon, it is true, sometimes gave way to his indignation while seated on the bench in his judicial capacity, but as a member of the Upper House, I never recollect his having violated the

Scottish representative peers, and 28 Irish representative peers.—  
ED.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Law, born November 16, 1750; appointed Attorney-General in 1801, and Chief-Justice of the King's Bench in 1802. He was created Baron Ellenborough in the latter year.—ED.

decorum usually observed in that assembly. Lord Ellenborough on more than one occasion burst forth into transports of anger, accompanied with language such as is seldom heard even in the most obscure courts of Lincoln's Inn or of the Temple. I allude in particular to the expressions that fell from him on the debate respecting the compensation given by Pitt to the Duke of Athole for his seigniorial rights in the Isle of Man. I think it took place in the summer of 1805, only a few months before that Minister's decease. Not that I approve of the measure, which I have always considered as one of the most censurable ever adopted by Pitt. But the epithets affixed to it by the Chief-Justice of the King's Bench appeared so unbecoming as to induce Lord Mulgrave to remind him that he was addressing peers, not lawyers. Nor did the sentence which he pronounced upon Lord Cochrane<sup>1</sup> for that nobleman's participation in the memorable and infamous "hoax" practised on the Stock Exchange excite less condemnation. Such, indeed, was its severity, as effectually to prevent its being carried into complete execution. Notwithstanding these defects of character and deportment, he proved himself highly qualified for the great post that he filled during near seventeen years of the present reign. Plumer and Dallas,<sup>2</sup> though neither of them were men of brilliant talents, have deservedly attained, and at this hour continue to occupy, two of the greatest situations in the profession of the law.

[15th—22d February 1788.] The attention of the metropolis now became concentrated on West-

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Earl of Dundonald.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Plumer in 1813 was raised to the newly instituted office of Vice-Chancellor. He died in 1824, at which time he was Master of the Rolls. Robert Dallas, like Plumer, was well versed in the law of elections. He died in 1823, just after resigning the Chief-Justiceship of the Common Pleas.—ED.

minster Hall. Burke, who led the way in the proceedings, rising on the third day of the trial, commenced an oration unequalled, I believe, either in antiquity or in any modern period of time. Those who most disapproved the impeachment yet were not less sensible on that account to the magnificent structure of ideas, the vast series of facts, the prodigious grasp of his mind which could arrange, and his memory which could retain, such a multitude of transactions. If we further reflect that Burke had never visited the scene which he thus presented before the minds of his audience in colours the most glowing, we shall find new cause for admiration of the mighty faculties conferred on him by Nature. The illustrious orator,

———"Quem mirabantur Athenæ  
Torrentem, et pleni moderantem fræna theatri,"

had personally seen Macedonia, had visited Pella, and had conversed with Philip, against whom he declaimed. Cicero had been quæstor in Sicily before he undertook the attack of Verres, who exercised the office of prætor in that island. But Burke knew Bengal only by report, and had never beheld either Mahomet Reza Cawn, or Nundcomar, or Gunga Govind Sing, the agents, enemies, or ministers of the Governor-General. The historical and geographical accuracy which he exhibited while narrating the principal events that took place in the dominions subjected to the East India Company, from their original conquest by Clive down to the recent period when Hastings returned to Europe, afforded fresh matter of wonder. Four days did he continue to supply this lucid stream of information. At the conclusion of the third morning, it is true that his bodily powers becoming unequal longer to sustain so arduous an effort, he was com-

pelled by indisposition to postpone his further observations. But resuming with new vigour the task on the following day, he finally accomplished it. His termination, if it was not ludicrous—for extremes touch—was appalling, when he at last impeached Hastings, not only as state criminals had formerly been accused under the Stuarts and the Tudors, “in the name of the Commons of England in Parliament assembled,” he arraigned the Governor-General “in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, of the people of India, and finally, in the name of human nature itself.”

I was present as a member of the Lower House during a considerable part of the time which elapsed between the commencement and the conclusion of Burke’s speech, or rather of his four harangues. It would be difficult to convey an idea of the agitation, distress, and horror excited among the female part of his audience by his statement of the atrocities, and in many instances of the deeds of blood, perpetrated, as he asserted, by Hastings’s connivance or by his express commands. Curiosity naturally attracted, on each successive day, a vast proportion of females, many of whom were peeresses or women of the highest condition. No sooner, however, had the emotions produced by Burke’s description in some measure subsided, than Fox, addressing the Chancellor, attempted to lay down as a principle that the managers intended to substantiate each charge separately, to hear Hastings’s defence as well as evidence, and to reply,—by this mode of accusation proceeding to a conclusion on every specific article previous to opening another head of charge. Law strongly objecting, as counsel for the prisoner, to such a form of proceeding, which he declared to be subversive of all equity or the practice of judicial courts, Fox undertook to justify

it by precedents. Nor did he blush to cite the cases of Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, and of the celebrated Lord Strafford as precedents in favour of his proposition. Two more tyrannical and oppressive examples of parliamentary or popular violence under the forms of law could not have been selected from our annals since the death of Elizabeth. The first, which took place in 1624, set on foot by the vindictive animosity of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was marked in its progress, not less than in its conclusion, by every characteristic of iniquity and oppression. So contrary to all principles of justice did the fine inflicted on the Earl of Middlesex appear to Charles I., that one of the earliest acts of his reign was its remission. It is unnecessary to say a word on the trial of Strafford, which formed the prelude to civil war, and was followed within eight years by the execution of the King his master. Yet on such a basis, wholly inapplicable to the asserted crimes or misdemeanours of Hastings, did the managers pretend to found their reasonings, and to prosecute the Governor-General of India in Westminster Hall for alleged offences committed in his official capacity many years antecedent in the centre of Asia.

The peers appeared to have formed other ideas of their own duty, dignity, and becoming mode of procedure. Having withdrawn to their own House, a debate of great interest arose two days afterwards, which was begun by Lord Thurlow, who stated the object of discussion with his characteristic ability. Nor, though he reprobated the impeachment (as was well known) individually, did he pronounce a less eloquent eulogium on Burke's splendid exhibition of talent. But he at the same time declared that the demand made by Hastings's counsel was a right, not an indulgence, adding that he could conceive no principle on which the defence could be

conducted except one, namely, "to oblige the managers to complete the whole of their case previous to a word being uttered in exculpation of the prisoner." Lord Loughborough having endeavoured to demonstrate that the ordinary rules of proceeding in criminal law did not apply to parliamentary impeachment, which could not be shackled by the forms observed in the courts below, the Chancellor rose a second time. "My Lords," said he, "with respect to the law and usage of Parliament, I utterly disclaim all knowledge of such law. It has no existence. True it is that in times of despotism or of popular fury, when to impeach an individual was to crush him by the strong hand of power, of tumult, or of violence, the law and usage of Parliament were quoted in order to justify the most iniquitous or atrocious acts. But in these days of light and of constitutional government I trust that no man will be tried except by the law of the land, a system admirably calculated to protect innocence and to punish crime."

Having subsequently shown from a review of all the state trials under the Stuart reigns, even down to that of Sacheverel inclusive, that in every instance were to be found the strongest marks of tyranny, injustice, and oppression, "In the present impeachment," concluded Lord Thurlow, "I trust your Lordships will not depart from the recognised established laws of the land. The Commons may impeach: your Lordships are to try the cause. And the same rules of evidence, the same legal forms which obtain in the courts below will, I am confident, be observed by this assembly." So enlightened a comment on Lord Mansfield's principle respecting the difference between criminal and political justice proved irresistible. Though the First Minister had joined in the



impeachment, yet only thirty-three peers could be found to sustain Lord Loughborough, while eighty-eight supported the Chancellor. When this decision was communicated by him to the managers in Westminster Hall on the following day, Fox, speaking as their organ, arraigned it in the warmest terms. Renouncing the enlarged principles of constitutional freedom by which he had always pretended to regulate his public conduct, he undertook to claim and to defend one of the most odious rights ever exercised by the House of Commons. I mean the privilege of bringing up new articles of impeachment at any time—not only when the prisoner was engaged in making his defence, but even when his defence should be concluded.

This pretended right, worthy only of the worst periods of our history, did not, however, receive from the Chancellor the slightest mark of assent or approbation. Fox entered next on the subject of trials by impeachment, declaring them to form a characteristic feature of our constitution. Then diverging to the law and usage of Parliament, he maintained, "in opposition to opinions held elsewhere, that it formed one of the most important and valuable branches of the law of the land," thus lending the support of his transcendent talents to sustain a doctrine the most oppressive to the subject. Such was Fox, who throughout his whole life alternately attacked or defended the same measures, according to the position in which he stood, trusting to his own ability or eloquence to cover all departures from consistency. These preliminaries being laid down, he proceeded to open the charge against Hastings for his treatment of Cheyt Sing, the Rajah of Benares. His speech, which lasted several hours, and which formed nearly a repetition of that addressed by him to

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the House of Commons on the same subject twenty months earlier, in June 1786, justly excited, as a composition, great admiration.

[*25th February—1st March 1788.*] At length, towards the close of the month of February, commenced the business of the session. A very delicate, doubtful, and important subject of discussion had unexpectedly arisen between the Administration or rather between the Board of East India Control, and the Court of Directors. Pitt having originally expelled Fox from power by joining the latter corporate body when menaced with extinction by the Coalition Ministers, it might naturally have been expected that he would not lightly quit so advantageous a political ground. Yet, in the lapse of about four years, the two heads of party seemed to have changed sides, Fox now sustaining the East India Company, while Pitt undertook to restrain their authority. In order to explain how so improbable a transmutation could take place, it is necessary to state that during the period when war seemed to impend as a consequence of our interference in the affairs of Holland, the British Government, apprehensive for the safety of our Eastern possessions, determined on sending out four regiments to that quarter of the globe. The Directors, impressed with the same fears, not only acquiesced in the measure, but expressed their satisfaction at its adoption. When the danger was, however, surmounted, Ministers still persisting in their original intention with a view permanently to strengthen the forces in India, a violent opposition arose in Leadenhall Street. The Court of Directors even proceeded so far as to refuse receiving on board their ships the royal troops. Under these circumstances no possible mode of speedily terminating the dispute presented itself except by a recourse to

Parliament. But there were two ways in which Government might obtain from the Legislature the necessary powers. One by a bill enacting or conferring them, the other by a declaratory bill, explaining and removing doubts relative to the right vested in the Commissioners by the Act of 1784, which, it was now maintained from the Treasury bench, had fully empowered the Board of Control to exercise an unlimited command over the military and political concerns of India. The latter alternative was adopted by Pitt, though it evidently opened a wide field for controversy, as it placed Fox in the very position which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had himself occupied, and on which his Ministerial greatness had been constructed, namely, the defence of the East India Company against violence on the part of the servants of the crown.

From the first moment that the Minister moved for leave to bring in his projected bill, down to the time of its being carried to the House of Peers, during a period of near three weeks, the most determined opposition was experienced from a variety of quarters. It originated not merely from Fox, nor was it limited to his adherents. Enemies started up among the supporters of Administration, men of the most independent minds and fortunes. Barré, whose loss of sight, when added to age and decay, seldom allowed him to attend in his place, rose more than once to reprobate and expose the measure. Baring, then one of the Court of Directors, displayed the same resistance. Notwithstanding his deafness, which infirmity had recently subjected him to the sarcastic edge of Sheridan's wit, few individuals in that assembly could contend with him in financial knowledge and commercial information. Like Barré he belonged to the Marquis of Lansdowne's little band.

Fullarton, whose duel with Lord Shelburne rendered him known early in life, who had subsequently distinguished himself on the theatre of India, where he commanded a considerable body of troops during the war with Hyder Ally, and who, whenever he spoke, manifested no ordinary talents, opposed the bill with his utmost force. I had the happiness to enjoy a place in his friendship, and though towards the close of his career, when acting as one of the three Royal Commissioners in the island of Trinidad, the excess of his zeal during the contest in which he there engaged with General Picton formed subject of regret,<sup>1</sup> yet I seize with pleasure the present occasion to commemorate his numerous virtues, his disinterestedness and elevation of character. Flood, whose rivalry and animosity to Grattan in the Irish House of Commons produced so many animated scenes within those walls, a man of the most forbidding physiognomy, but endowed with great powers of intellect, presenting himself on this occasion, as he had done some years earlier, in December 1783, when he opposed Fox's East India Bill, now inveighed against Pitt's measure as an insidious, rapacious, and unjustifiable act of power.

These formidable opponents were joined by others not less respectable. "The bill that I approved in 1783," said Powis, "possessed all the characteristic features of its author's mind, bold, open, and manly. It now becomes evident that the measure which I then opposed was founded in duplicity and fraud, undermining the charter which it pretended to support." Sir Edward Astley, member for the county of Norfolk, descended of an ancient and opulent

<sup>1</sup> All the charges brought against Picton by his fellow-Commissioner in the government of the island fell to the ground. Fullarton died in 1808. Picton was sole governor of Trinidad from 1797 to 1802.—D.

family renowned for loyalty, himself a plain, unlettered country gentleman, of very moderate talents, but of the most upright views, was heard with much attention. Scarcely did he rise in general more than once or twice throughout a whole session, on the subject of a turnpike bill, or some local business affecting his constituents. "I voted," exclaimed he, "for the present Chancellor of the Exchequer's India Bill because I was given to understand that it formed the reverse of the bill which preceded it. But I now find that there is very little difference between them. The one seems to be nearly as bad as the other. I have not withdrawn my confidence from him, but I wish he would keep better company. In other words, I distrust his colleagues." This severe reflection, levelled principally, or rather exclusively, at Dundas, could not be mistaken. Even Pulteney, a man whose vast property and strong sense gave weight to his opinions, declared himself adverse to the measure. He had contributed, both by his vote and by his pen, to overturn Fox's memorable bill. His opposition, therefore, painfully affected Ministers. Yet, unlike Sir Edward Astley, he qualified his line of action by compliments to Dundas on his integrity and assiduity at the Board of Control. Nor did he omit to give his tribute of praise to Pitt's Ministerial character and conduct. Four years later his daughter was raised to the British peerage as a baroness, and she subsequently attained by creation to the rank of a Countess.<sup>1</sup> Sir Edward Astley, whose ancestors fought and bled in the royal cause under Charles I., died a commoner. Even Major Scott, little as he might incline to support Hastings's pro-

<sup>1</sup> Henrietta Laura Pulteney, created Baroness of Bath in 1792; married Sir James Murray, Bart., who took the name of Pulteney; created a Countess in 1803, and died in 1808, when the title became extinct.—ED.

secutors, yet spoke repeatedly in terms of strong condemnation against the pending bill.

Assailed from so many unexpected quarters, the Minister nevertheless could boast of some able supporters. At their head stood Scott, who at the present hour, far advanced as he is in life, fills with undiminished powers of mind the high employment of Chancellor.<sup>1</sup> Pitt only waited for Lord Mansfield's resignation to make him Solicitor-General. Francis, a man little inclined to indulge in compliment towards his opponents, yet did justice to Scott. During the debates that arose on the present occasion Francis observed, "We have among us a learned person, who is universally considered as the great luminary of the law, whose opinions are oracles, to whose information and authority all his own profession look up with reverence." No member of the long robe took a more active part in the debates than Hardinge. Not content with defending and justifying the Ministerial measure, he attacked Powis in a manner so personal as to excite general censure. Two, and only two, Directors of the East India Company spoke in commendation of the bill.

Among the county members I recollect Rolle alone who ventured to stand forward in defence of Pitt, while Bastard, his colleague, spoke as well as voted on the opposite side. Their fate, indeed, proved different,—Rolle entering the House of Peers eight years afterwards, while Bastard continued to represent the county of Devon down to the period of his decease, only a short time ago.

[*3d March 1788.*] A petition against the bill having been presented by the East India Company, Erskine was heard as their counsel at the bar. Devoted to Fox, ardent in his temper, and incapable of being awed or intimidated by the pre-

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Scott, afterwards Earl of Eldon.—ED.

sence of any assembly, Erskine, who during the short time that he represented Portsmouth in the last Parliament had signalised himself by the defence of Fox's East India Bill, resumed in his legal capacity the consideration of the same subject. Spurning the limits within which advocates are usually confined when pleading before the House of Commons, he ventured not only to eulogise in the warmest terms the rejected measure of his friend, but to treat the bill of 1784 as a vile imposture practised on a credulous nation. The murmurs of various members, indignant at such an infraction of decorum, at length compelled the Speaker to interpose his authority in order to repress Erskine's prurience. Affecting to apologise, while he at the same time took occasion to renew the offence, "If," observed he, "Mr. Speaker, I have been guilty of any irregularity, it arises solely from a diminution of that respect which I was accustomed to feel towards this assembly before it was shorn of its dignity, but which no longer animates me since the assumption of the extraordinary powers arrogated and exercised by the present Board of Control." Sentiments so insulting would probably have attracted an expression of Ministerial indignation on their author's head, if it had not been repressed by the peculiar circumstances of the case. Pitt beheld himself in a situation far more perilous than any that had occurred since his elevation to the head of the Treasury. The Westminster scrutiny, oppressive as it was, had been undertaken immediately after the overthrow of the Coalition Ministry, during the intoxication incident to his early popularity. His Irish propositions were rejected by the Parliament of that country, not here in Westminster, and from the prosecution of the Duke of Richmond's plan of fortifying the dockyards he

had finally desisted when warned by the casting vote in the House of Commons. But in the present instance, if outnumbered by the opposers of the bill, no honourable retreat remained for him, nor was it easy to conceive how, if defeated, he could even with dignity continue in office. As he had risen to power by one India Bill, he might fall by another.

[5th March 1788.] Influenced by these reflections, which imperiously suggested themselves to his mind, Pitt found his best auxiliary not in the talents of his supporters, nor even in his own eloquence, but in his character. Never, perhaps, was the value of integrity, moderation, and correct deportment more forcibly exemplified than in the instance before us. Fox might, and I believe did, possess the first of those qualities in an eminent degree, but he wanted the two latter recommendations to royal and to national favour. At the end of four years it had become demonstrated that the two East India Bills (that of Fox and that of Pitt) differed more from each other in name than in reality. Yet the discovery, though it shook, did not overturn the Minister, because the East India Company, the two Houses of Parliament, and the country at large, however undeceived they might be, were by no means disposed to transfer the reins of government to Fox and his adherents. Pitt, notwithstanding the exertions which he made to convince and to retain his friends, beheld himself abandoned by many individuals who usually supported him. However much he strove to conceal his emotions on a point so humiliating to his haughty mind, he nevertheless felt it deeply, for no Minister ever more justly appreciated the importance of character. Conscious of the dangerous nature of the ground which he had to maintain, he tried to prove



that the powers now assumed by the Board of Control were virtually, if not specifically, vested in the Commissioners by the Act of 1784. But able and persuasive as Pitt was, his oratory failed of its usual effect. Sheridan, directing his keen jests against the head of the India Board, observed that Dundas had formerly compared the Commissioners constituted by Fox's Bill to seven doctors and eight apothecaries prescribing for one poor patient. "Yet," continued he, "their prescriptions were at least less nauseous than the dose now mixing by the learned Doctor of Control, who, in the spirit of a political quack, exhorts his patient to swallow it, assuring him that there is no occasion for his confining himself at home, but that he may safely go about his business as usual. This new sovereign remedy will no doubt be soon advertised under the title of Scotch Pills for every sort of disorder."

Irritating as were such observations, Fox's insulting comments on the humbled situation of the Minister sunk still deeper into his mind. "Whence arises," exclaimed Fox, "so determined an opposition to the present measure? Have the Chancellor of the Exchequer's friends deserted him? No! For even now they declare that they have confidence in his integrity. What then is the cause of this change? Why, in the good sense of the House, because the present bill has removed the film from before their eyes, while it begins to explain to the whole kingdom its destructive tendency." After alluding in terms of contemptuous ridicule to the indifference about power which Dundas affected to feel, Fox inveighed with great animation against a declaratory bill. "The crown and the East India Company," observed he, "are at variance on a disputed principle. Why not try the fact in a court of law? 'No,' says the Mini-

ster, 'in a court of law I can exercise no influence; in the House of Commons I can.' What must such an act be denominated except oppression? But I trust there is virtue enough yet remaining in this assembly to resist its further progress."

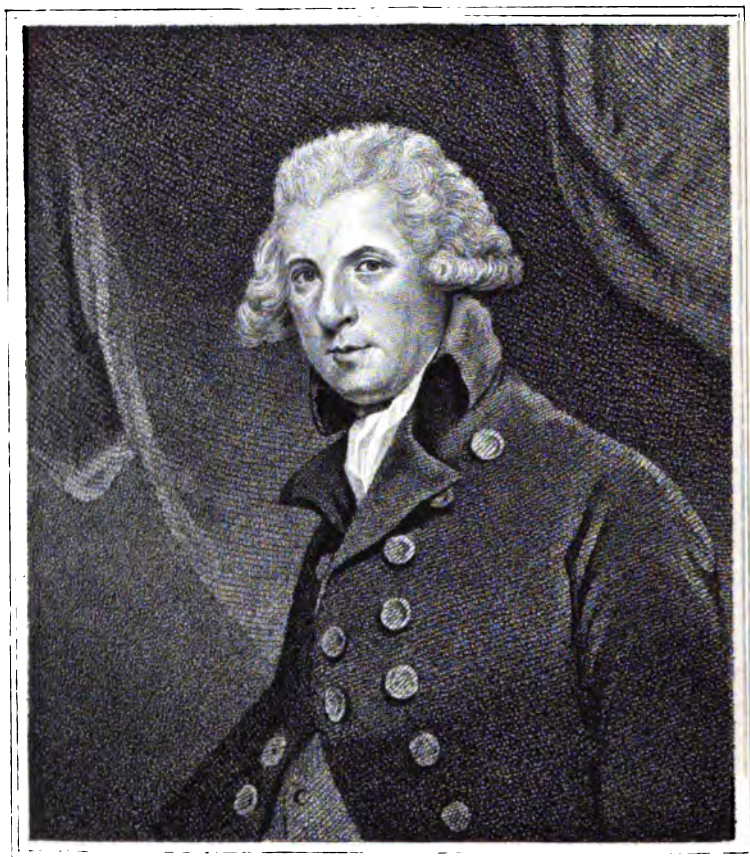
The hour was very late when Fox sat down, and as the impression which he had made could not admit of a doubt, every eye became directed to the Treasury bench in expectation that Pitt would endeavour to efface it. Instead, however, of rising, he alleged personal indisposition as the reason of his silence, promising, nevertheless, to answer his antagonist's arguments in the future stages of the bill. I scarcely recollect a division taking place under more discouraging circumstances for Administration since Pitt's elevation to power. Nor did the result prove that Fox had miscalculated his force. Though 312 persons voted, the Minister carried the question only by a majority of fifty-seven. Such a triumph partook of defeat, and clearly manifested how little he could trust to the support which he had been accustomed to receive within those walls, unless he modified the discussion. A defection of less than thirty members, if they joined Fox, would have left Pitt in a minority, and that defection was by no means impossible.

[*7th March 1788.*] Yielding unquestionably to the considerations dictated by his present position, Pitt resolved, therefore, instead of advancing in a path where his popularity, if not his power, might be lost, to retrace his steps. Doubtless, too, he felt that he was engaged in Dundas's cause even more than in his own, since the real authority of the India Board resided, not in the First Lord of the Treasury, nor still less in Lord Sydney, the nominal President, but in Dundas. Neither could Pitt be insensible that however eminent were the talents of

that ambitious, aspiring, and able advocate, however closely cemented might be their personal friendship, and however necessary to Administration were his exertions and eloquence in Parliament, yet his moral reputation fell below his political ability. Contrary to his usual practice, Pitt therefore opened the discussion on the evening which it was moved "to bring up the report of the bill." Assuming a tone and a language foreign to his disposition, he endeavoured to regain the eminence which he had occupied before the introduction of the present obnoxious measure. Having first conciliated his hearers, he next addressed himself to their understanding, and, while he vindicated the bill which he had brought forward, professed nevertheless his anxious desire to propose as well as to adopt every clause and every mode of prevention against the apprehended danger to the constitution. "If," exclaimed he, "checks upon patronage are tendered, let them come from whatever side of this assembly they may, or from whatever individual, however hostile, accompanied by whatever language, I will gladly receive them. I shall even regard the man who proposes them as my best friend, because he will have proved that he is a friend to the British constitution." The conclusion of his speech, most personal to Fox, "whom," he said, "that House had dethroned four years before from his high seat of despotism," was filled with reiterated declarations that he never would consent to or permit the introduction of patronage under any form. To Pulteney he particularly addressed himself, in terms calculated to obviate that member's objections to the measure; and finally, as the best proof of his desire to submit it to censure or emendation, he moved "to recommend the bill."

Never did Pitt at any period of his eventful life





From a picture  
by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

W. T. Pryor del.

*Richard Brinsley Sheridan.*

exhibit a stronger proof of his consummate judgment than in adopting this line of action. It disarmed and finally defeated Opposition, but it could not silence their sarcasms or their clamours. Sheridan, whose eloquence, abilities, and powers of fancy Pitt recognised, denying him at the same time reason and truth,—Sheridan, indignant at the compliments paid to his talents at the expense of his morals, retorted on the Minister with inconceivable ingenuity and severity. After drawing a masterly picture of Pitt's political life, and stigmatising the prominent features of his Administration, "His friends, nevertheless," continued Sheridan, "boast of his conscience, and always assert that he has been debauched into every act of folly or of iniquity that he has committed. They say in his defence that his conscience has been surprised in the present instance, and that the bill now before us has originated, not in wicked intention, but in bad advice. I readily admit that he has people about him who are capable of intentionally misleading him. It constitutes his original crime that he has connected himself with men from whom no good counsel ever can come, and it is earnestly to be wished either that his conscience would keep a better look-out or that he would in future keep better company." These pointed attacks upon Dundas were followed by reflections not less personal on Pitt himself as well as on the bill under discussion. "The Chancellor of the Exchequer," observed Sheridan, "originally stole in upon the House this obnoxious measure without explanation of any kind. He procured it to be read a first and a second time, but being detected in the fact, his arm arrested, and himself exposed—finding that not only his supporters but men on all sides have taken alarm—then he comes forward humbly entreating that it

may be checked and guarded in every shape. The bill, with its terrors, its arrogance, and its evils, comes first, while the checks come behind as a rider. Prerogative foremost, the constitution in the rear."

Burke, engaged as he was in the prosecution of Hastings, attended nevertheless in his place, and joined in the cry against Ministers on that memorable night, conscious that the division would decide, not only the fate of the bill, but perhaps the duration of Administration. Having first directed his animadversions against Dundas, he next turned round upon Pitt. "I congratulate the House," exclaimed he, "that confidence is at length exploded. The Minister has himself avowed his distrust of his colleagues, and demanded suspicion from us. Well may the learned gentleman who presides over the destinies of the East be clothed in sackcloth and ashes! I entreat it may be remembered that the caution comes not from this side of the House, but from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he who, forty-eight hours ago, recommended, nay, bullied us into confidence! But even when engaged in so humiliating an act, he performs it with an air of pride. He scatters his ashes abroad with dignity, and wears his sackcloth as if it were a robe of purple." This fine portrait, sketched with such ability, bore the closest resemblance to its original. Burke concluded by accusing the Minister of the grossest hypocrisy, combined in the present instance with fraud. But all these imputations were swallowed up in the philippic pronounced by Fox. It formed one splendid display of reason, animated by a sentiment allied to triumph. For though the division that took place ultimately extinguished the hopes of Opposition, it could not deprive them of a species of victory. The Minister had been humbled and compelled to adopt the language of a suppliant

in order to retain a small majority, while Fox, whose imprudence and ambition originally precipitated him from power, beheld his bill rescued in a certain degree from the load of obloquy under which it had so long been overwhelmed. There was indeed something like exultation in his address to the House, which might be said to resemble the animated apostrophe of a man who unexpectedly emerges out of darkness into light.

"I introduced," said he, "my bill as the only mode of saving the East India Company and their territories from ruin. It produced alarm and was rejected in another assembly. What means were set on foot to effect that purpose, though well informed on the subject, I shall not now relate. But the best panegyric ever delivered on my bill has just fallen from the lips of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, conveyed in those finished periods and in that felicitous order for which he is so eminently distinguished." Having next contrasted the provisions of his own bill with the present declaratory measure before the House, he endeavoured to show that under every point of view the former was most analogous to the principles of the constitution. "I have been accused," said Fox, "with endeavouring to pluck the crown from his Majesty's head. Such language would be more justly applied to the ambition of those who are seated opposite me. When have I conducted myself like a disloyal subject? When did I ever endeavour to diminish the just prerogatives of the crown? I know too well their value. Those who have poisoned the royal ear by suggesting that only one side of the House of Commons is loyal to the sovereign are the real enemies of the constitution. The Minister has by his recent conduct forfeited all claim to the confidence of Parliament. Let him at once avow his error, withdraw



the present bill, and introduce another adequate to the purposes of saving India."

This advice had already been tendered to Pitt in the progress of the debate from two respectable quarters. I mean by Bastard and by Pulteney. But as they both accompanied their exhortation with testimonies of the warmest satisfaction at the altered language which he had now thought proper to adopt, conveying withal an indirect assurance that his present concessions might probably secure their vote, or at least their support, he did not think it necessary to stoop to so humiliating an expedient. Neither did he attempt to answer Fox, only declaring that the whole speech just pronounced was, as far as it personally regarded himself, "a foul aspersion on his character." The division at length took place, when it appeared that while Administration maintained its preceding numbers, the Opposition fell off in their supporters, 187 persons voting with Government, precisely as on the former evening, but Fox, who then counted 125, could now command only 115. The majority of the Minister had therefore augmented from fifty-seven to sixty-seven members.

[10th—14th March 1788.] Confirmed in office by this proof of parliamentary adherence, and warned by his recent danger, Pitt now hastened to accomplish his engagement by bringing in a variety of clauses, all calculated to circumscribe the powers which the bill conferred on the Board of Control. No concessions or limitations could, however, impose silence on Flood, who maintained that every argument which had been urged against Fox's bill applied with equal force to the present measure. "I appeal," exclaimed he, "to any candid man whether such a difference exists between them as to cause a great Ministerial revolution in

the country, to convulse the state to its foundation, and to make the sovereign start from his throne. Such were the effects of a former bill. Yet how did it essentially differ from the one now before us?" Fox, as if satisfied with the severe discipline which he had administered so recently to the Minister, took little part in the debate of that evening. But Pitt's restrictions, spontaneously imposed on his own power and on that of his colleagues at the India Board, had allayed the effervescence excited in the House, and brought back to his standard various individuals who had absented themselves. On the division his numbers rose to 210, while the Opposition could not reach beyond 122. His bill might consequently be regarded as secure. Yet its adversaries inveighed against it with redoubled asperity down to the last moment that it remained under discussion. A short suspension of public business followed this violent struggle, while in Westminster Hall obstacles and delays arose which impeded the progress of Hastings's trial. To Burke and Fox succeeded Grey, whose eloquence, youth, and figure attracted a numerous audience, composed indeed frequently more of the wives and daughters of Hastings's judges than of the judges themselves. Many of the peeresses occupied their seats, session after session, with exemplary patience, curiosity, and perseverance.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the whole month of March, on account of the pressure of parliamentary affairs, scarcely ten days were allotted to the impeachment, nor was it before the middle of April that the second charge, which regarded the Princesses of Oude, was opened, not by Sheridan, but by Adam and Pelham.

<sup>1</sup> Fifty guineas were offered for a ticket when Sheridan made his Begum speech, at the end of which he sank into the arms of Burke. "A good actor," writes Gibbon; "but I have called this morning; he is perfectly well."—D.

[*April 1788.*] It is long since I have mentioned even the name of Lord North. His augmenting infirmities, particularly his loss of sight, incapacitated him, without great inconvenience, from attending as a member of Parliament. He had not, indeed, been once seen within the walls of the House of Commons during the debates that arose on the Declaratory India Bill, when his presence and his talents might have been usefully employed for his party. Barré, it is true, who suffered under a similar privation, had taken an active part in those discussions, but, though far more advanced in his career than Lord North, his robust and athletic frame promised him many years of life. Colonel North supplied his father's vacant seat on the Opposition bench.<sup>1</sup> Another luminary of the period of the American war, Rigby, disappeared likewise at this time. I believe he expired at Bath.<sup>2</sup> Declining health, loss of office, but perhaps more than both, pecuniary embarrassments arising out of the extensive demands made on him by Government for payment of the balances of national money remaining in his hands—these combined causes had operated to withdraw him almost altogether from Parliament, though he still continued member for Tavistock. He possessed talents for addressing a popular assembly which were sustained by confidence that nothing could abash. In that quality he did not yield even to Dundas. Under Lord North's Administration Rigby had occupied a great space in the public mind, but since that time he seemed to have almost become politically extinct, and after his decease was speedily forgotten.

Rigby's death was preceded only a few weeks by

<sup>1</sup> For a touching picture of Lord North's home and family, see Walpole's Letters to Lady Ossory, October 4, 1787 ("Letters," ix. 114).—D.

<sup>2</sup> He died on the 8th of April 1788, in his sixty-seventh year.—ED.

that of the Dowager Viscountess Townshend, one of the most distinguished females of the court and reign of George II. She attained nearly her eighty-seventh year, but her intellectual faculties had suffered little or no decay. In the empire of mind she might be said to have occupied the place left vacant by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and by Lady Hervey. At Lady Townshend's house in Whitehall, George Selwyn and a number of other men eminent for wit or talent were usually to be found, who constituted her evening society. Her father, whose name was Harrison,<sup>1</sup> rose in life by the personal favour of William III., leaving to his daughter a fine property, which she bequeathed to Lord John Townshend, her second grandson, one of the most gallant, accomplished, highly informed individuals of his time, the inseparable friend and companion of Fox throughout all the vicissitudes of his political life. Lady Townshend, besides retaining her mental powers undiminished, lived to see her eldest grandson created an English Earl,<sup>2</sup> and her son raised still higher to the dignity of a British Marquis, a circumstance probably without parallel in the peerage of this country. These titles, as well as the numerous baronies of Plantagenet creation that unite in the actual representative of the name of Townshend, descended from the illustrious families of Vere, of Devereux, of Compton, and many others, may all be regarded at present as in a state of eclipse. So is the name of Courtenay. Both will probably emerge again under some future sovereign.

Among the persons who in April 1788 made a strong appeal to the public as candidates for dramatic fame, I must not omit Lady Wallace. She

<sup>1</sup> Once Governor of Fort St. George, Madras.—D.

<sup>2</sup> Earl of Leicester, 1784. His father, the fourth Viscount Townshend, was created Marquis of Townshend in 1787. The Earl of Leicester succeeded to the Marquisate in 1807.—D.

was one of the three daughters of Sir William Maxwell of Monteith, and a sister of the Duchess of Gordon. Inferior to the Duchess in beauty, she possessed nevertheless great personal charms, which were augmented by the eccentric attractions of her deportment and conversation. No woman of condition in my time has ventured to emancipate herself so completely from all the restraints imposed by custom on her sex. I have seen her habited as a man attending the debates in the House of Commons and seated in the gallery appropriated to strangers. Nor is this extraordinary act by any means the greatest deviation from female decorum which I have known her to commit for the gratification of curiosity or amusement. She was married to Sir Thomas Wallace of Craigie, a Scotch baronet, but she thought proper to prosecute him for adultery before the Court of Session; and though the accusation was dismissed, Lady Wallace always continued to live in a state of total separation from her husband. Emulous of attaining the fame of Mrs. Behn and of Mrs. Centlivre, she composed and brought forward at this time a comedy entitled "*The Ton, or the Follies of Fashion*." It was performed three times at Covent Garden Theatre, each time to crowded audiences. I was present at two of the three representations. All the principal characters, male and female, were individuals of fashion, easily recognised by those who knew the town. The piece wanted neither plot, nor wit, nor movement, nor easy dialogue, nor theatrical effect, though it was in many passages very indelicate,<sup>1</sup> yet not so

<sup>1</sup> Geneste says of this play (which was admirably cast), that "nearly the whole of it was very dull." Lady W. remarks in her preface, that the people who trembled at the idea of seeing themselves exposed in this comedy resolved that it should not be heard. She complained (with much reason, according to Geneste) of her play being taxed with indecency. Wraxall, however, is nearer the truth.—D.

grossly violating decency as Congreve has done in "Love for Love" and in "The Way of the World," confessedly two of the finest comedies in the English language, if considered merely as dramatic compositions. But our refined manners and habits will not tolerate the scenes at which the Belindas and the Stellas of the reign of George I. assisted without repugnance, and almost without a blush. All the efforts of Lady Wallace's friends, however numerous and powerful, with the Duchess of Gordon at their head, could not protect the play, nor secure it from theatrical damnation. She never presented another piece to the manager, but her whole life was in itself a perpetual comedy. After the commencement of the French Revolution, about the year 1794, she embarked for Hamburg, confessedly with the intention of there meeting and conferring with the expatriated French general, Dumouriez. Lady Wallace terminated her extraordinary career at Munich, censured for the irregularities of her deportment, and little lamented by her own family.

Scarcely had Pitt surmounted the impediments to the "East India Declaratory Bill," when Administration was assailed from another quarter. Lord Howe, who presided at the Admiralty Board, having at the time when a rupture with France was apprehended to be imminent made a promotion of naval officers, thought fit to pass over more than forty captains, while he selected sixteen for elevation to the rank of admirals. Lord Rawdon (since created Marquis of Hastings), a nobleman of generous and elevated feelings, alive to every impulse of wounded honour, conceiving these individuals to have been unjustly superseded, brought the subject before the Upper House. But the Ministerial influence in that assembly could stand the severest assaults of Opposition, and the First Lord of the

Admiralty defended his conduct with reasons of great solidity. Finally, Lord Rawdon's motion for an address to the King, praying that "he would take into his consideration the services of those captains who had been passed over in the late promotion," was negatived without a division. This event happened as early as the 20th of February. Not deterred, however, by the ill success of Lord Rawdon's attempts, Mr. Bastard brought forward the same subject in the House of Commons on the following day. He was a man of ample fortune, of an independent mind, of grave and correct deportment, animated by upright intentions, and possessing a sound though not a superior understanding. His position, as one of the two members for the county in which was situate Plymouth with its dockyards, gave him no ordinary advantage when discussing a naval question.

Among the captains who had been passed over in the recent promotion were two, Balfour and Thompson, who having received the thanks of the House on the event of the memorable 12th of April 1782, seemed to challenge more respect than their companions. Bastard enlarged on the peculiar hardship of excluding two distinguished officers from the reward of their long services, men who had participated in the defeat of De Grasse. He ventured even to assert that unless some reparation should be made to their injured characters the service itself would receive an irreparable wound. "Henceforward," exclaimed he, "increase of fortune, not of fame, will form the object of naval commanders. Servility and meanness must conduct to eminence. He who would rise in the profession must effect it by running on the errands of the head of the Admiralty Board, by performing the part of his follower, his flatterer, perhaps of his pimp." He concluded

by moving to address his Majesty that "he would confer on Captains Balfour and Thompson some mark of his royal favour." Pitt opposed this proposition by reasons which were unanswerable. Having shown that it would form an unprecedented interference with the prerogative of the crown, he contended that "even if such a principle could be admitted, yet the House of Commons was incompetent to take upon themselves the selection." He treated with ridicule the idea of making the two captains named by Bastard subjects of an address to the sovereign for favour merely because they had been thanked in the lump with all the officers and all the seamen who gained the glorious victory in question. Nor did the Chancellor of the Exchequer omit to notice with becoming disapprobation the very gross manner in which had been described the offices necessary to be assumed by candidates for promotion. Such insinuations would indeed have been most unjustly applied to Lord Howe, who was a man of very correct manners, but it did not appear equally certain that some of the qualifications enumerated might not have formed recommendations to one of his predecessors in the same office, the Earl of Sandwich. Bastard finding that none of the Opposition leaders came to his aid, that Lord Hood took part against him, and that the House seemed disinclined to adopt his proposition, withdrew it, stating at the same time his determination to renew it under another form.

[18th April 1788.] This menace he accomplished about two months afterwards, when he moved for "the House to resolve itself into a committee to inquire into the conduct of the Admiralty respecting the late naval promotion." The arguments with which he maintained his proposition were nearly the same as he had used on the preceding occasion, but



the result proved widely different. Many professional men, some of whom were warmly attached to Administration, impelled by personal feelings, declared in favour of the motion. Sir George Howard, an officer devoted to the crown, and who had been placed at the head of the army, protested that he thought an inquiry could not be refused without the sacrifice of honour and of justice. Other individuals of independent character followed his example. Pitt resisted with great eloquence and ability the tide which set strong against him, combating it by precedents as well as by arguments, allowing, nevertheless, that if the point was agitated within those walls, the present mode formed the only constitutional ground on which the discussion could take place. Fox, concurring in this sentiment, admitted the royal prerogative to be sacred as it regarded the distribution of military honours and rewards. "So firmly am I of that opinion," added he, "that if an address to the crown had been proposed, I could not support it, but the motion being for a committee, I shall give my vote in its favour; because it is the constitutional province of this House to watch over the executive departments wherever abuse is suspected to exist; and finally to institute inquiry with a view either to censure or to punishment." He next proceeded to maintain that in the recent promotion the First Lord of the Admiralty had acted with partiality and oppression, or, to use the mildest term which could apply to the act, with caprice. A division took place at a late hour in the morning, Ministers only carrying the question by sixteen votes. Bastard was sustained by 134, while 150, of which number I was one, followed Pitt. It was, in fact, a defeat to Administration; and the mover, encouraged by such a proof of parliamentary approbation, gave immediate

notice that he would speedily bring the matter anew under discussion.

[29th April 1788.] The third and last debate which arose out of this naval promotion followed after an interval of about ten days. Neither Pitt nor Fox, neither Dundas nor Sheridan, bore any part in it. Bastard, who had exhausted the subject as a topic of declamation, after a short speech moved that it is "injurious to the service and unjust to set aside in the promotion to flags meritorious officers of approved service." The Treasury bench committed its defence principally to Lord Hood. That veteran commander, whose figure, countenance, and manners exhibited the characteristic marks of hard service, had fought his own way up to honours and dignities. It was therefore highly improbable that he would become the apologist of a measure which violated justice in the persons of men with whom he had trod the quarter-deck during forty years. Yet Lord Hood strenuously vindicated the conduct of the nobleman presiding at the Admiralty. From documents which he produced it appeared that in almost every past promotion a greater proportion of captains had been passed by than included, but no complaint was to be found of national injury sustained in consequence of such a practice. "The noble Viscount," pursued he, "ranks conspicuous in the opinion of the navy as a brave and skilful seaman. He has hitherto maintained a character of unsullied honour and unimpeached integrity. Can it be supposed that such a man, placed at the head of the naval administration, would abuse his power and plunge into voluntary disgrace?"

Various naval officers rose during the debate, every individual of whom, with the single exception of Lord Hood, supported Bastard's motion. Macbride, who in a former session had opposed

the Duke of Richmond's plan of fortifications, inveighed against the system adopted by Lord Howe. "I stand," exclaimed he, "fortieth on the actual list of post-captains at this time. Before the promotion reaches me I may be worn out, and consequently I shall be set aside, if only those who can do actual duty are henceforward to expect a flag. Two officers now present (Lord Hood and Sir Adam Affleck) have been deservedly elevated, one to an Irish peerage, the other to the rank of a baronet. Monuments in Westminster Abbey have been voted for two others who fell gloriously in the action of the 12th of April 1782, while Captains Balfour and Thomson, who equally signalised themselves on that occasion, are kicked out of the service." Lord Mulgrave stood precisely in a similar predicament with Macbride, his commission as a post-captain bearing date on one and the same day. During the first discussion respecting the promotions made by Lord Howe, Lord Mulgrave, though seated on the Treasury bench, ventured to rise and to support indirectly Bastard's motion. But being gently reprehended by Pitt for thus emancipating himself from his Ministerial fetters in compliance with professional feelings, he remained silent throughout the course of the two succeeding debates. He had nearly served out his time, and he received his reward, the British peerage, little more than two years afterwards. Aware how unpopular was the ground as well as the nobleman to be defended, Ministers did not venture to meet the motion with a direct negative. They therefore moved the previous question, which was carried by a majority of fifty-one—the respective numbers being 220 against 169.

Notwithstanding this numerical victory of Administration, the triumph of public opinion remained with the opposite party. The two naval captains

excluded by Lord Howe received ample compensation for the loss of rank if the parliamentary recognition of their merits could allay their wounded feelings. Nor did that nobleman long survive in his official capacity the selection which he had made, whatever were the motives by which it was dictated. He languished near three months in employment, and then resigned. He was indeed kicked upstairs, being advanced from the dignity of a Viscount to the rank of an Earl, with remainder of a barony to his three daughters, he having no son. This augmentation of honours, which he probably anticipated as certain whenever he should retire from the Admiralty, though it might alleviate, could not compensate the loss of power, coupled with the circumstances by which it was occasioned or at least accelerated. He returned no more to that post, but the naval action of 1st of June 1794, when he defeated the fleet of republican France in the Bay of Biscay, shed a lustre over his declining years. That the King did not regret his resignation no man doubted. Lord Howe's conduct during the American war while commanding beyond the Atlantic, as well as in Parliament subsequent to his return, was known to have made a deep impression on his Majesty's mind. Nor could he efface that sentiment by the charms of his address or of his conversation. Taciturn, phlegmatic, and destitute of all gaiety, his German descent from George I.<sup>1</sup> might be traced not only on his features but in his whole deportment.

Those persons indeed who remarked the hostile part taken by Sir George Howard during the second debate relative to the promotions at the Admiralty,

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte, daughter of George I. and the Countess Von Platen (Lady Darlington), married Lord Viscount Howe, and was the mother of the Admiral.—D.

and who knew the almost unlimited deference of the Commander-in-Chief for his sovereign's supposed wishes, inferred that so good a courtier did not steer such a course without secretly knowing that it would be approved at St. James's. Pitt unquestionably fulfilled every Ministerial obligation imposed on him towards one of his colleagues in office throughout the discussions that took place, however he might lament the cause that rendered necessary his exertions. So might Lord Hood, whose services, eminent as they confessedly were, yet would not perhaps have raised him to the dignity of the British peerage if Fox instead of Pitt had presided in the councils of the crown from 1784 to 1801. Assuredly his brother Alexander, who had rendered himself so obnoxious by his evidence on Keppel's court-martial after the action of the 27th of July 1778, would not have been created a Viscount unless Pitt had been Minister.<sup>1</sup> The two Hoods were sons of the clergyman of the village of South Petherton, in Somersetshire, where was situate the estate of Burton Pynsent, bequeathed by Sir William Pynsent to the first Mr. Pitt as a tribute of grateful admiration for his public services. They rose under his auspices and devolved on his son. Pitt could not well regret Lord Howe's departure from office. He had indeed every reason to rejoice at it, as he supplied the vacant place by introducing his own brother, the Earl of Chatham, into that high employment. Lord Hood, named at the same time a member of the Board of Admiralty, was given him as a Mentor.

[5th May 1788.] The severe conflicts which Pitt had with so much difficulty surmounted during the passage of the East India Declaratory Bill, and throughout the discussions respecting Lord Howe, were speedily obliterated by a day of triumph.

<sup>1</sup> Created Viscount Bridport in 1800.—ED.

Early in May he laid before Parliament a state of the finances, or, in technical language, he opened the Budget. Never did any Minister make a more gratifying exposition, conveyed in language equally clear, concise, and yet ample in point of information. Without parade or ostentation, he observed that a very considerable augmentation had occurred in the expenses of the actual year beyond the estimate made in 1786, which increase had been judged indispensable to our national honour as well as prosperity. Having then detailed the different items or heads of this extraordinary expenditure, having shown that they amounted in the aggregate to near £1,300,000, of which sum £180,000 had been voted towards payment of the Prince of Wales's debts; "Notwithstanding these heavy demands," added Pitt, "there now remains a clear surplus of £17,000 without new taxes, without loan, and without interrupting for an instant the application of the million set apart for the discharge of the national debt. Seven millions have been expended within the last four years on the improvement of the navy. Thirty ships of the line and thirty-five frigates have been constructed or repaired more than during the first four years which followed the peace of 1763. Meanwhile, in addition to all these propitious events, we have extinguished two millions and a half of our national debt."

Gratifying as was the Minister's disclosure of the state of the finances, the contrast which they formed with those of France prodigiously augmented its effect. "I have," said he, "seen within these few hours past the acknowledged condition of the French revenue as exhibited by their own Government. According to that account the avowed annual deficiency, after all the retrenchments which they have effected, does not fall short of £2,300,000 sterling.

Our rival, therefore, who engaged in a war for the emancipation of our late colonies, which object she accomplished, and from which she projected to draw immense advantages, has failed in her ambitious calculations." So exhilarating a picture of our national resources reflected too much lustre on the Administration to pass without comment. Sheridan rising as soon as the Chancellor of the Exchequer finished, observed that "invidious as the task might be, it nevertheless became necessary to dissipate the delusion under which the country laboured, and to detect the fallacies by which it was still attempted to perpetuate that deception." He then proceeded with great financial ability to dissect every proposition contained in the speech just pronounced, exhibiting proof of the solidity and depth of those faculties the brilliancy of which he had so frequently displayed in that assembly.

Passing in review consecutively Pitt's assertions and calculations, he endeavoured to demonstrate their falsity, or at least their uncertainty and exaggeration. If he did not persuade his audience of the truth of all his own assertions, he unquestionably impressed on their minds a strong conviction of his extraordinary endowments, for, contrary to his accustomed habits, wit formed no part of his appeal. The whole was fact and arithmetical demonstration. Such was the versatility of his parts, adapted to Parliament as well as to the theatre, formed equally to delight at Drury Lane, in the House of Commons, or in Westminster Hall. Sheridan wanted only two qualifications in order to have outshone all his contemporaries. I mean application and moral character. He possessed, even more than Burke, a superabundance of genius. But the defects of his conduct finally plunged him in embarrassments of every kind, enfeebled his intel-

lect, produced premature old age, accompanied with diseases, and terminating in death. Raised to the rank of a Privy Councillor before his decease, endowed with transcendent talents, after sitting almost his whole life in Parliament, caressed by princes, by women, by all mankind, his concluding days were passed in taverns, and in spunging-houses surrounded by bailiffs, a stranger to domestic tranquillity or enjoyments. Neither Bacon, nor the second Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, nor Pope's Duke of Wharton, hold out more striking proofs of the inefficiency of genius to excite respect, or even to procure comfort, if not accompanied with prudence and with morals, than was exhibited in the person of Sheridan.

Fox continued the attack thus begun on the Budget. "I make no scruple," observed he, "to assert, whatever odium may accompany the declaration, that our revenues and resources have been represented in language as much too sanguine as our annual expenditure has been estimated on too low a scale. This exaggeration produced the very delusion by which France has been reduced to her actual state of embarrassment. But such is the happy constitution of Great Britain, that we cannot long be held in error. We may be deceived in pence, in millions deception cannot operate." On the following day, Sir Grey Cooper, followed by Hussey,<sup>1</sup> member for Salisbury (both men deeply conversant in matters of finance), undertook to point out the fallacy of Pitt's propositions. The former, than whom few individuals within those walls better understood the subject, at considerable length discussed the Budget, and declared it to be an illusion. Hussey put various questions to the Minister, designed to probe the obscure or vulner-

<sup>1</sup> William Hussey.—ED.



able parts of his exposure. Pitt, thus assailed, justified his calculations. Yet with a manly mind he admitted, that though he saw no reason for expecting it, nevertheless the revenue might deceive his expectation in the coming year. "Should the fact so prove," added he, "this House must meet the difficulty in a becoming manner, and raise the deficiency by a loan or by new taxes." Pulteney, more favourably disposed towards Administration, complimented the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his financial plans, bestowing on them the most flattering epithets. All the resolutions proposed by Pitt for the adoption of the House were finally passed without any division.

The proceedings in the prosecution of Impey, which had been retarded by the examinations of witnesses, at length appeared to approach their termination. Towards the last days of April, Sir Gilbert Elliot began to open the charge relative to the trial and execution of Nundcomar. His monotonous and measured enunciation, unilluminated by a ray of vivacity or a spark of wit, derived nevertheless an interest from the sound sense which pervaded his whole discourse, from the serious nature of the accusation preferred, and above all, from his accurate information on the subject. He admitted that Sir Elijah's defence had produced on his audience, as well as on the public, a very favourable impression. But he took occasion, at the same time, to comment with great severity on the sort of defence to which the person accused had thought proper to resort. In fact, Sir Elijah, with the guarded caution of a man bred to the law, made only a verbal defence, declining to commit it to paper. The Chancellor (Lord Thurlow), when alluding to the circumstance during a debate in the House of Peers, had not hesitated to pronounce

Impey a wise man for having adopted such a mode of reply. Nor did he scruple to declare Hastings a weak man for having delivered in at the bar a written defence. Elliot adverting next to Sir Elijah's justification, that "he had done nothing more than the other judges who tried Nundcomar, and that if he was guilty, they participated in his culpability," observed, "In every instance where more than one person is accused of committing a criminal act, it is customary to prosecute the ring-leader. The end of justice is thus sufficiently answered, the principle of human penalties being to make an example of great offenders, thereby deterring others from the perpetration of similar enormities."

Sir Gilbert next approached a part of his argument on which he felt it necessary to observe the utmost circumspection. I mean the share taken by his own brother in Nundcomar's trial. This brother, Alexander Elliot, had been sent out when very young to Calcutta in the civil service of the East India Company, where he not only gave promise, but exhibited proofs of distinguished talents. They had justly endeared him to Hastings, and on the trial of the unfortunate Rajah, Elliot acted in court as interpreter. He was subsequently sent home to England by the Governor-General on a secret mission, at which time he brought to London the copy of that legal proceeding. Returning to India, he continued to enjoy and to deserve Hastings's friendship. But his career was arrested, he having perished in the flower of youth, from the consequences of passing the Cuttack river after a course of mercurial medicines, while he was on his way from Bengal to Madras. His premature end excited universal regret, and the Governor-General, as a last tribute to his memory, ordered a monument to

be erected on the spot where he expired. In his parody on Horace's "Ode to Pompeius Grosphus," Hastings has commemorated his friend, when alluding to the

"Abstulit clarum cita mors Achillen"

of the Roman poet, though I do not exactly recollect the English lines. Sir Gilbert attempted to prove that his brother, of whom he spoke with the warmest feelings of fraternal affection, neither participated in, nor had ever manifested any approbation of, Sir Elijah Impey's conduct during Nundcomar's trial. But Sir Richard Sutton, who undertook Impey's defence, produced and read in his place a letter addressed by Alexander Elliot to the Chief-Justice of Bengal. It was dated from the mouth of the Ganges, on board the ship which conveyed him to Europe, and contained the most unequivocal expressions in favour of the court as well as of the judge who tried and condemned Nundcomar. This evidence was not, however, brought forward on that night, being reserved by Sutton for the evening when a division finally took place on the question relative to Impey's guilt or innocence.

[*7th May 1788.*] Sir Gilbert Elliot on the second debate, which followed after an interval of about ten days, endeavoured to prove that the whole judicial proceedings instituted against Nundcomar were in themselves subversive of, as well as contrary to, the established forms of criminal justice. He denied that the King of England possessed or could delegate any jurisdiction whatever over the natives of India. His reasonings on that most important point appeared to me to carry with them great weight, if they were not indeed unanswerable. Even though the right of trying the accused Rajah by the autho-

rity of British laws should be recognised, yet he maintained that Impey's whole conduct while sitting on the bench carried with it an internal evidence of his intention or determination to dispatch Nundcomar. Sir Elijah well knew that the Rajah had not only come forward as the informer against Mr. Hastings, whom he accused of gross peculation, but was likewise engaged as a principal witness in a pending prosecution for the express purpose of proving the allegation at the very time that he was apprehended, indicted, and brought to trial. Impey's avowed political attachment to the Governor-General—a fact which was not contradicted—rendered it too probable that he had made himself the voluntary instrument of Hastings's resentment. Lastly, Elliot positively denied that the crime of forgery had ever been regarded throughout Hindostan as a capital offence punishable with death. Nundcomar's counsel, he observed, at the very commencement of the trial, had made objections to the competency of the tribunal before which he was arraigned—objections which the Chief-Justice answered with marks of unbecoming warmth and passion. Even in the examination of the witnesses, and throughout every part of Impey's conduct, he asserted that the indelible traces of partiality were obvious and incontestable, fixing on the Chief-Justice a strong suspicion of his having become the Governor-General's instrument for the purpose of offering up Nundcomar as a victim.

Having reached this stage of the charge, Sir Gilbert threw himself on the liberality of the House to permit of his postponing for a few hours the remaining circumstances of the case. Two points in particular, both which took place subsequent to the trial, merited, he said, their peculiar attention, namely, Sir Elijah's having overruled an arrest of

judgment which had been moved, and his refusal to grant a respite. Sir Richard Sutton opposing the proposition of any further delay as equally injurious to the feelings of the individual accused and disgraceful to their own proceedings, Burke started up in great agitation. After pronouncing a fine encomium on his friend's speech, he demanded whether some attention was not due to a member who requested a short pause from the exertion and fatigue that he had undergone? "We have been called upon," continued he, "to consider the feelings of the person accused. But the person himself does not manifest in his deportment that he is much actuated by feelings becoming his present situation. I have recently seen him in Westminster Hall, where he appeared rather like an accuser than a party accused. Contumacious, arrogant, confident, and assuming——" Here loud and general cries of "Order!" interrupted his further progress. Burke still attempted, nevertheless, to justify and even to repeat his animadversions on Impey's behaviour, as altogether unbecoming a man charged with such weighty crimes. Finding, however, that the House would not permit him to throw out reflections of that nature against an absent individual, he assumed a milder tone. With pathetic remonstrances he endeavoured to show that even Impey's friends would neither consult his honour nor his advantage by pressing for a hasty decision. He was himself, he said, from exhaustion, utterly unfit to take part in a debate of such magnitude. Pitt now interposed. Having passed a comment rather severe on the length of Sir Gilbert's two speeches, and having expressed his reluctance to postpone the business to another day, he yet admitted that if the mover of the charge found himself unable to proceed, the assembly must of necessity adjourn. It was uni-

versally agreed at the same time that a final decision should take place on the evening fixed for the next agitation of the question.

[*9th May 1788.*] Not having been present on that occasion, I cannot relate as an ear-witness any of the circumstances which then occurred. Some friends of Impey had strongly importuned me to attend in my place whenever the last discussion should arise. But as I thought very differently from them on the subject of his judicial conduct in Bengal, I left London in order to avoid giving any vote. In the composition of these Memoirs I lay claim only to one merit, truth, which necessarily includes impartiality. Whatever errors may become embodied in the work, I have not anywhere intentionally disguised or given a false colouring to facts. I highly disapproved and condemned every part of Impey's conduct, from the commencement to the catastrophe of Nundcomar's trial. That it was "a legal murder" I will not by any means assert, but the proceedings were more worthy of Jeffreys or of Scroggs than of Hale or of Forster. A determination not only to condemn, but to execute the sentence seems to have animated the Chief-Justice. Otherwise why did he not respite the prisoner? Yet, as three other judges participated with him throughout the whole proceeding, I doubt whether Impey could legally be an object of exclusive impeachment.

When I thus pass moral sentence on Sir Elijah I most reluctantly extend it to Mr. Hastings, under whose concealed directions or understood wishes it is impossible not to suppose that he acted. Here again I sacrifice to truth, for these Memoirs sufficiently attest how highly I estimate the Governor-General's public services. They were, in my opinion, eminent, but Nundcomar's execution cast

a shade over his Administration. I do not indeed hesitate to declare that, under all the circumstances of the two cases, the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, which has been considered as so great a blemish in the reign and character of Elizabeth, excites far less condemnation, and is susceptible of a much more solid defence, than are the proceedings that accompanied the trial and precipitated the end of the Hindoo Rajah. If I had been compelled to vote on the question, however I might have regretted such a necessity, yet beyond a doubt I should have been found on that night among the minority. I am of opinion that two-thirds of the members who were absent would, on a similar supposition, have acted in the same manner.

Though I did not assist in my place on the 9th of May, nevertheless the interesting nature of the subject, and my personal acquaintance with every individual who took part in the discussion, lead me to detail its principal features. It was universally admitted that Elliot summed up with great ability. He endeavoured to prove, from a number of concurring facts, the systematic criminality of Impey in not respiting the prisoner, even though he might have been capitally convicted by iniquitously applying to the case our statutes of English law. "I would vainly seek," continued Elliot, "such an accumulation of guilt in the legal annals of our own country. It is only from the sanguinary records of Spanish America that I can extract a precedent. When Pizarro was determined to put to death the Peruvian Inca Atahualpa, he constituted a court with all the formalities of law, before which tribunal he arraigned the devoted prince. Pizarro then accused him of having usurped his own kingdom, and of levying war on the Spaniards, his rightful sovereigns. On these atrocious charges

was the Inca condemned and executed." "What is there," observed Elliot, "in Sir Elijah Impey's character that should prevent his impeachment? Neither the dignity, the profound learning, nor the comprehensive genius of Lord Bacon, the founder of modern science, could shelter him from the punishment merited by his corruption as a judge." Towards the conclusion of his speech, after appealing to the reason of his audience, he addressed himself to their emotions. Having related the affecting particulars of Nundcomar's end, from the testimony of an eye-witness, "The ghost of that murdered Rajah," exclaimed Sir Gilbert, "demands justice. It is on all our heads. The cry of blood rings in our ears, and bursts our walls for vengeance. To your justice, therefore, I commit the culprit. Deal with him as he deserves." There is something in these appalling expressions which involuntarily reminds us of Clarence's dream, of the "shadow like an angel with bright hair dabbled in blood," who shrieks aloud—

"Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments!"

Sir Richard Sutton, to whom the defence of Impey was principally intrusted, rising immediately, addressed the House. He was a man of coarse and almost rugged exterior, but whose powers of mind, matured by experience and fortified by perfect information of the case under discussion, enabled him to place in the most favourable point of view every fact which could conduce to the extrication of the Chief-Justice. After professing his inability to follow Sir Gilbert through a speech, or rather through three speeches, comprising in the aggregate fifteen hours, Sutton, in language of perspicuity and energy, brought forward a number of documents calculated to erase the impression of Impey's guilt. He was



followed by Macdonald and Arden, the Solicitor and Attorney Generals, both of whom justified Sir Elijah's conduct on the bench throughout the trial, but both acknowledged that if they had sat as judges on the occasion they should have respited the prisoner. Such an admission was in itself a moral condemnation. All the entrenchments thrown up by legal ingenuity in order to protect the Chief-Justice were, however, stormed with resistless eloquence by Fox, who accused him of having committed a deliberate murder. The application to Nundcomar's case of English Acts of Parliament passed under Elizabeth or early in George II.'s reign, long before we acquired any territorial possessions in India, Fox treated with mingled ridicule and indignation. "Would any man except Sir Elijah Impey," demanded he, "on the doubtful operation of such statutes, have taken upon himself the responsibility of putting an individual to death? Must he not have said to himself before he passed sentence on the unhappy prisoner, 'If I had been in England I could not have perpetrated this act of blood. There the King's prerogative of mercy would have been sacred, but here this wretch is in my power, and I will murder him.'"

Pursuing Impey with the same force of severe reason, Fox endeavoured to render palpable his complicity with the Governor-General for the purpose of offering up Nundcomar. "It is, to my conviction," observed Fox, "absurd to maintain that no malice existed in the Chief-Justice's mind throughout the trial. His subservience to Mr. Hastings is to be presumed from all the circumstances of the case. Being so presumed, a corrupt motive forms a necessary inference; for no two individuals would agree in so wicked an act as that of taking away a fellow-creature's life without a corrupt motive of

some kind." Fox's conclusion was most impressive. "If," said he, "I was called on to pronounce as a man of honour, I should declare that Sir Elijah Impey has been guilty of a deliberate murder. I would say the same if I were to depose as a jurymen on my oath. I lament that our powers, as a branch of the Legislature, are so contracted, that we can only vote him guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour, because, in my opinion, imprisonment for life, and half his fortune, could form no adequate compensation for his guilt." He added, "It is well known that I am not a sanguinary man. But I should not regret if murder were, in the present instance, to incur the punishment deserved by murder."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not rise till a late hour. On his line of conduct, Impey's friends well knew, would probably turn the final event. Pitt spoke with force and decision, declaring his firm belief that "in no view could any corrupt motive be brought home to Sir Elijah, and that therefore he should give his negative to the question of impeachment, as unless a corrupt motive could be proved, no man ought to support Elliot's proposition." The accusation of a conspiracy between Impey and Hastings for the purpose of destroying Nundcomar he treated as destitute of any shadow of solid proof. Reviewing in succession all the objections urged against the competency of the tribunal before which the Rajah was arraigned, the consequent illegality of the proceedings, and the refusal of the Chief-Justice to grant a respite, Pitt endeavoured to demonstrate their futility. So indignant was Fox at finding the Minister thus extend his shield over Impey, that he did not scruple to say in reply, "I consider the man who can bring himself seriously to defend such conduct as an

accomplice in the guilt of the murder." But Pitt calmly answered, that "if the innocence of Nund-comar had ever been shown, he would then have admitted there existed some foundation for the declamatory invective just pronounced." I have, nevertheless, always considered Pitt's speech on this occasion as having done more honour to his abilities than to his principles. That the corrupt motive by which the Chief-Justice had been actuated was not juridically proved must indeed be conceded, but all the circumstances of the transaction impress with a strong conviction of his guilt. Nor will impartial posterity probably approve the conduct of a Minister who could join in the impeachment of Hastings for political crimes, while he became the advocate and the protector of a judge who, when sitting on a case of life and death, acted like Impey.

Two individuals distinguished themselves on that evening, one by the eloquent but vehement nature of his speech, the other by its Spartan force and brevity. The former, Colonel Fullarton, whom I have already had occasion to mention, inveighed in animated terms against Impey as a criminal of the most atrocious description, whose ermine was steeped in human blood, who trampled on all laws to gratify his insatiate love of money, who amassed an immense fortune by bribes and contracts, and who had converted the court of judicature itself into an "*officina scelerum et malorum*." Nor did he fail to verify many of these allegations by more than declamation. Some of the facts which he enumerated, however irrelevant they might be to the immediate subject under discussion, yet deeply impressed his audience. On the cruelty and injustice of subjecting a Hindoo to the operation of English laws, which never could be construed to extend over that country, Fullarton observed, "If it were legal

to hang Nundcomar on the statute passed in 1728 against forgery, it would be equally consonant to justice to hang the Nabob of Bengal, or the Great Mogul and all his court, on the statute of James I. against bigamy." Sir James Johnstone, who always brought Robert Bruce before my eyes, but who concealed under a rough form and unpolished manners great integrity directed by strong sense, exclaimed, after listening more than two hours to Fullarton's severe philippic, "Every argument confirms my opinion that the question ought to be supported. We have beheaded a king, we have hanged a peer, we have shot an admiral, we are now trying a governor-general, and I can see no reason why we should not put on his trial a judge and a chief-justice."

Burke concluded this long and most interesting discussion. Having laboured, not without effect, to prove from a variety of concurring testimonies the confederacy that existed between Mr. Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey for Nundcomar's destruction, "Those persons," continued he, "who sanction by their vote such an act of enormity will practically say to future judges, 'Copy the conduct of the Chief-Justice of Bengal. Desert your duty and your impartiality. Become political instruments in the hands of Government. Oppose power to right, and instead of protecting innocence, embrace the cause of guilt.'" His animadversions on Pitt were most severe. "It was asserted of old," said Burke, "that if the gods addressed themselves to men they would use the language of the Greeks. With equal truth may I declare that if despotism itself were to speak, it would use the language and enforce the arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer." After a debate of more than twelve hours, a division at length took place. I believe that the attendance never exceeded

200 members at any period of the night. Only 128 voted on the question, who did not constitute a fourth part of the aggregate numbers of the House of Commons as then formed. Fifty-five were for the impeachment, seventy-three negatived it, thus leaving a majority in favour of Sir Elijah amounting to eighteen. It might be deemed an escape, but it could not be denominated a triumph. Dundas did not vote on the question, a circumstance which gave rise to much speculation, as he very rarely took a different line in Parliament from the Minister. That the real independent majority of the members present were of opinion to impeach Impey no man can doubt who considers how many individuals implicitly followed Pitt. I will estimate them at eleven, but I might take them at a higher number, and I shall enumerate them.

The Hon. John Charles Villiers, whom he made Chief-Justice in Eyre north of Trent not more than a year and a half afterwards, may be placed at their head. This office, a sinecure and for life, he owed entirely to the Minister's friendship. Lord Camelford (probably at Pitt's request) brought Mr. Villiers into Parliament for Old Sarum. Early in 1787 he had been made Comptroller of the King's Household by the same powerful influence. He possessed no parliamentary ability, but his figure was tall and elegant, his features noble, and set off by a profusion of light hair. The "*Rolliad*" notices him as—

"Villiers, comely with the flaxen hair,"

subjoining, "The character of Villiers seems to be drawn after the Nereus of Homer, who, as the commentators remark, is celebrated in the catalogue of warriors for the handsomest man in the Grecian army, and is never mentioned again through the whole twenty-four books of the '*Iliad*.'" Edward

James Eliot and his younger brother, John Eliot, now Earl of St. Germain's, who then jointly represented the Cornish borough of Liskeard, might be regarded as almost inseparable from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had raised their father to the British peerage immediately after his own accession to power in January 1784,<sup>1</sup> and the eldest of the two brothers stood in the closest ties of connection with him by marriage.

Mr. William Grenville, from consanguinity as well as from principle, naturally kept his eye fixed on Pitt. So did the Marquis of Graham, on whom he lavishly conferred offices and honours down to the period of his own decease. Lord Hood and his brother, Sir Alexander, I have already counted not long since among the devoted adherents of the Minister. Rose and Steele, the two Secretaries of the Treasury, followed of course the head of the Board. No individual in the House was probably more strongly attached to Pitt than the Earl of Mornington, whom he had made a Lord of the Treasury in 1786. He represented Windsor at this time.<sup>2</sup> Lastly, Addington, now Lord Sidmouth, owed his whole advancement in life to the protection of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who not long afterwards placed him in the Speaker's chair. I do not include in this list either Mr. Bankes or Lord Apsley, now Earl Bathurst, though both voted against Impey's impeachment, because the former, notwithstanding his friendship for Pitt, always displayed a most independent mind, neither to be warped by interest, ambition, or attachment. Lord Apsley, who was placed at the Board of Admiralty by Pitt in December 1783, of which he still remained a member, I might be fully justified in ranging among

<sup>1</sup> Edward Eliot Craggs, Lord Eliot.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Marquis Wellesley.—ED.

the Ministerial followers. Hardinge, who during the debates that preceded Hastings's prosecution in April and May 1786, exclaimed so vehemently against allowing the Governor-General's public services to form a set-off against his demerits—Hardinge, who then displayed so tender a political conscience, yet voted for acquitting Impey. Kenyon likewise gave his vote to Sir Elijah, but he did not speak on the question. It is evident that Impey owed his security to his profession. If he had not been a lawyer he would probably have been impeached. We must recollect that Pitt was bred to the bar; Fox felt no predilection for the long robe.

Several of the Minister's most intimate friends absented themselves on that night. Lord Bayham, afterwards Marquis Camden, whose father had been raised to the dignity of an Earl only two years earlier by Pitt, and who was himself a Lord of the Admiralty, did not attend the debate. Another member of the same Board, a nobleman with whom I have lived in some degree of intimacy, a man most conscientious and correct in all the actions of his life—I mean Lord Arden<sup>1</sup>—declined voting on the point. So did Lord Mulgrave, notwithstanding the lucrative office of which he was in possession, and the peerage to which he looked forward with anxious expectation. John James Hamilton, who so soon afterwards became by Pitt's special favour Marquis of Abercorn, strenuously as he supported the Governor-General, yet did not form one of Impey's small majority. Even Mr. Robert Smith, on whom his friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer induced his Majesty, nine years later, to confer a British peerage, absented himself on that evening. To the members who followed the head of the Administration we must add four who were devotedly attached to Hastings.

<sup>1</sup> Charles George Perceval, Baron Arden.—Ed.

Major Scott was his agent, Mr. Sumner and Mr. Sullivan his two sureties at the bar of the House of Lords. Finally, Barwell, who while a member of the Supreme Council had invariably taken part with the Governor-General in all his disputes with Clavering, Monson, and Francis. Barwell had besides, during his residence at Calcutta, formed an intimate connection with Impey. A prosecution having been instituted by the East India Company against the former for specific acts of peculation, which suit was tried before the latter, Barwell was cast in the action. Yet, while sitting on the bench, the Chief-Justice, though engaged in the exercise of his solemn judicial functions, did not hesitate to declare that he had accepted the office of trustee for Mr. Barwell and of guardian to his children. This fact, which Colonel Fullarton asserted in the course of his speech, and which remained uncontradicted, sufficiently accounted for the vote given by Barwell. If, after deducting the personal friends of Pitt and of Hastings, we calculate Impey's majority, we shall find it reduced almost to a nullity. His person and fortune were, however, secured by it. His official character, in my opinion, suffered shipwreck.

[12th—18th May 1788.] Since the commencement of Hastings's impeachment no account had hitherto been delivered to Parliament specifying the mode in which the sums of money were expended which had been advanced by the Exchequer to the managers of the prosecution, although these issues already amounted to several thousand pounds. A motion being unexpectedly made from the Ministerial side of the House, demanding that "the account should be laid on the table," Pitt expressed not only his assent to the proposition itself, but added that the Lords of the Treasury had ad-



dressed a letter on the subject to the managers, making the necessary inquiries. "As, however," continued he, "the answer received gives little hope of deriving from them the information required, I am happy that means have been adopted for compelling its production." Fox, with great temper, replied that the managers were undoubtedly responsible to Parliament for the propriety of the services ordered, though not for the disbursement of the money, which lay with the solicitors employed on the prosecution, over whom it was the duty of the Lords of the Treasury to exercise due vigilance. But Burke, who, as chairman, had written the answer alluded to by Pitt, after observing that he should make no objection to the motion, subjoined that "the suggestion made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as applying to the letter which he had written by order of the committee of managers was not true." Pitt, thus contradicted on a point of fact, rose a second time, and after remarking the decency and propriety of Fox's reply, "The other gentleman," said he, "perhaps from being accustomed to use an extraordinary license of speech elsewhere, forgets the place in which he now is, and seems desirous of introducing the practice within these walls. No impropriety committed by him, and which disgraces himself, shall, however, prevent me from doing my duty, as well as saying whatever may be dictated by a sense of that duty." He then formally repeated his preceding assertion. Irritated by this reprimand, Burke inveighed with much asperity against the Minister. Finding, nevertheless, the sense of the House decidedly adverse to him, he on the same night presented the accounts. They contained no particulars of the expenditure, briefly stating that a sum exceeding £8000 had been already issued by the Trea-

sury. About £3800 of it was laid out in erecting or in furnishing the court, while more than £4000 passed into the hands of the gentlemen of the long robe retained for aiding the impeachment.

Another occurrence of a most interesting nature took place on the same evening. Wilberforce (a name which will always be pronounced with veneration) was at that time one of the representatives for the county of York. Impelled by the active benevolence of his character, he had, after mature reflection, digested a plan for the regulation, if not for the suppression, of the negro trade. As early as the commencement of the session he had even given notice of his intention to bring the subject before the House, which he would personally have carried into effect if he had not been prevented by illness. Pitt, with whom he had contracted an early friendship, which years had cemented, undertook therefore to supply his place. Having briefly stated that the African trade had long engaged the public attention, Pitt observed that two opinions respecting it seemed to divide the nation, all agreeing in the necessity of taking some steps, but not coinciding as to their precise extent, the complete abolition being demanded by a vast majority, while others conceived that it might still be permitted to exist under certain limitations. But on account of the advanced period of the session he thought it judicious to defer all further proceedings till the ensuing year, when, if his friend should not be sufficiently recovered to undertake the task, he pledged himself to submit a proposition for their consideration. He concluded by a motion to that effect. Throughout his whole speech Pitt took care, however, not even to glance at his own opinions upon the question, reserving all explanation respecting it for future deliberations.

Fox instantly stood up, and in language of force, yet not intemperate, declared his surprise as well as his sorrow at finding that it was intended to postpone to another session the consideration of so important a subject. Pitt nevertheless persisting to declare that he would make no disclosure of his individual intentions until the whole matter should be agitated on a future day, Burke reiterated Fox's arguments in more vehement terms. Martin, who, like Aristides, never inquired whether a measure was merely useful, but whether it was just and humane, briefly expressed his hopes that "no political benefit, no commercial expediency or advantage, would ever be allowed to preponderate in opposition to the eternal dictates of moral rectitude." Sir William Dolben, one of the representatives for the University of Oxford, declared his instructions from that respectable body to be most adverse to a continuation of the commerce in slaves. With much emotion he pointed out the misery endured by the human victims crowded into vessels, on board which they were transported to the West India colonies, as calling loudly for immediate interposition. "Between the present session," added he, "and the commencement of the next, ten thousand lives may be sacrificed to our criminal delay." Mr. Pelham, then member for the county of Sussex,<sup>1</sup> rising in his turn, avowed not only his detestation of the traffic in question, but his intention, if supported by the House, to bring forward before the approaching prorogation a measure for its general regulation. In answer to so many appeals Pitt replied, that though he should most thankfully receive every species of information which might be offered him,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pelham, of Stanmer. He was summoned to the House of Lords by his father's barony of Pelham in 1801, and succeeded his father as Earl of Chichester in 1805.—ED.

yet, as he could not consider the question itself to be ripe for discussion, he should persist in his original motion.

Two, and only two, individuals ventured to speak in extenuation, if not in justification of the African trade. They jointly represented the town of Liverpool, and loudly called for an immediate investigation as the sole mode of exposing the calumnies circulated respecting the merchants as well as the planters engaged in that unpopular branch of commerce. The first, Lord Penrhyn, had been raised to the dignity of the Irish peerage by Fox in the autumn of the year 1783, when the King, though he positively refused to augment the British House of Lords, consented to add eight or nine to the peers of the sister kingdom. I may here remark that in thus acting his Majesty, or his secret advisers, displayed much foresight, for on the first division to which the memorable East India Bill gave rise in the Upper House shortly afterwards the adjournment was carried against Administration by a majority of only eight votes. If, therefore, Fox could have induced George III. to give him a similar mark of royal favour or weakness with the proof of both exhibited by Anne in 1711, when, on the Lord Treasurer Harley's suggestion, she created twelve peers at one time, the coalition might have rendered ineffectual all his efforts at emancipation. Indeed the King appears to have foreseen that his only chance of escape from bondage lay, not in the Lower House, where Fox's presence, eloquence, and influence overbore all opposition, but among the peers.

To return to Lord Penrhyn. He was a man of moderate talents, childless, but possessing very extensive patrimonial estates in North Wales,<sup>1</sup> besides

<sup>1</sup> The peerage became extinct in 1808. Colonel Douglas Pennant, the possessor of the estates, was created Baron Penrhyn in 1866.—ED.

considerable property in the West Indies. His colleague, Bamber Gascoyne (son of the Lord of the Admiralty of the same name, whom I have had occasion to mention more than once towards the close of Lord North's Administration) treated the abolition of the slave trade as a visionary and impracticable project, but admitted that some regulations might be beneficially adopted. Lord Penrhyn flatly contradicted Sir William Dolben's assertions respecting the severities inflicted and the mortality produced among the Africans on their passage across the Atlantic Ocean, observing that "the argument proved too much, as the whole profit made by the commanders of the vessels employed in that branch of commerce arose from the number of negroes whom they could bring to the market in good health." Pitt's resolution for "postponing the further consideration of the subject till the ensuing session" was finally carried without any division.

[*20th May 1788.*] I have already related that, in consequence of the motion made for that purpose, Burke had laid on the table of the House, though not without marks of indignant reluctance, a statement of the expenses already incurred by the prosecution of Hastings. But it was couched in terms so general and laconic as to give no satisfactory information. A second motion therefore followed from the same quarter for an account "specifying to whom, and for what purpose, the respective sums had been issued." Sheridan, after observing that the obvious intention of the mover was to disgust the public with the trial as a source of enormous expense, diverged, with his usual felicity, into the path of humour. "Unquestionably," continued he, "the House may, if they think fit, resolve that no counsel shall be henceforward allowed the managers. In such case it will be necessary to move that the

Attorney and Solicitor General with the Master of the Rolls be added to our present committee. Or the House may come to a resolution compelling the managers themselves to defray the expenses of counsel. If so, I hope they will have the goodness to join to the committee Sir Sampson Gideon and some others of the wealthiest individuals composing this assembly." Sir Sampson, who then represented the city of Coventry, if he was one of the richest, was likewise one of the most benevolent men who has appeared in our time. His hand was never shut to distress or closed against human sufferings. He might have furnished the prototype of Cumberland's "Jew." Pitt not long afterwards raised him to an Irish peerage.<sup>1</sup> Sheridan concluded by expressing a hope that when the account should be produced the mover would follow up his present motion with another, recommending that "the counsel employed should in future be better paid." The managers, nevertheless, being obliged to withdraw previous to a division personally affecting themselves, the question was carried by sixty against nineteen votes.

[21st May 1788.] Among the most magnificent public structures which have been raised under the reign of George III. in London or Westminster may justly be reckoned Somerset House. I am indeed old enough perfectly to remember the ancient palace of that name, constructed about the middle of the sixteenth century by the imprudent and unfortunate Lord Protector, uncle of Edward VI. It was a beautiful and princely edifice, neither strictly Gothic nor Grecian in its architecture; the successive residence of two queens-dowager during the period between the Restoration and the Revolution,

<sup>1</sup> Created a baronet in 1759, and assumed the name of Eardley in 1789, when he was created Baron Eardley in the peerage of Ireland.—ED.

namely, Henrietta Maria of France and Catherine of Portugal ; lastly, the pretended scene of Sir Edmondbury<sup>1</sup> Godfrey's murder in 1678, one of the most obscure and problematical events recorded in our history. Passionately attached as I am to the monuments of departed times, I beheld its demolition, which took place about the year 1776, with sentiments of no ordinary regret. The construction of the new edifice was intrusted to Sir William Chambers, an architect who, though he may not rival the fame of Inigo Jones or of Sir Christopher Wren, yet would have passed down to posterity with distinction if in an evil hour he had not published his "Dissertation on Oriental Gardening." This performance exposed him not only to ridicule, but to poetic ridicule illuminated by genius and pointed with inconceivable elegance of satire. I allude to "The Heroic Epistle," which appeared about the spring of the year 1773. The author (universally considered to be Mason<sup>2</sup>) thus apostrophises Sir William at the commencement of the poem—

"Knight of the Polar Star! by fortune placed  
To shine the cynosure of British taste,  
Whose orb collects in one refulgent view  
The scattered glories of Chinese virtù!"

Chambers found, however, in the royal patronage ample compensation for these "paper bullets of the brain." He was made Surveyor-General to the Board of Works, as well as architect to the King, some branches of whose education he had superintended under the reign of George II. He likewise derived no inconsiderable pecuniary advantage from the percentage allowed him on the large sums expended in the erection of Somerset House.

Eleven years had already elapsed since its com-

<sup>1</sup> The correct spelling of his name is now proved to be Edmund Berry.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Now known to be so. See Letters of Walpole and Mason.—D.

mencement, during which time above £300,000 had been issued to him from the Treasury. His own estimates originally fell very short of that sum, and yet it was calculated that £100,000 more would still be wanted for its completion. So vast an expenditure of the public money excited animadversion, and the subject was repeatedly mentioned with much condemnation in the House of Commons. I well recollect, during the course of the session under our review, the loud complaints made respecting it by Hussey, one of the representatives for the city of Salisbury. He was a man of coarse, simple, and homely manners, but of recognised integrity, versed in arithmetical calculations, however deficient in classic attainments; never speaking except on pecuniary topics, and exceedingly tenacious of the national purse. Somerset House, whenever mentioned, always excited his indignation, and on one occasion he exclaimed, "Would to heaven that building were burnt to the ground!" Observing Dundas opposite to him, seated on the Treasury bench, and who, as Treasurer of the Navy, was preparing to occupy the apartments officially assigned to him in the quadrangle, Hussey added smiling, "I do not, however, wish it at present, as the right honourable gentleman would be enveloped in the conflagration." The individual who at this time brought the subject under parliamentary consideration was Sir John Miller, an Irish baronet. His wife, who in the early part of the present reign published her "Travels through Italy," attained after her return from the Continent a degree of celebrity by establishing a sort of "blue stocking" society or "Della Crusca Academy." The scene lay at her seat of Bath Easton Villa, near the city of Bath. Here she gave morning entertainments, to which the company of both sexes repaired for the purpose of depositing



their poetical compositions within an urn placed in the pleasure-grounds. The productions were afterwards read aloud, and honorary prizes adjudged or distributed by the lady of the mansion to the successful candidate. Sir John, after his wife's decease, brought himself into the House for a Cornish borough,<sup>1</sup> though by no means endowed with parliamentary talents or eloquence.

Having detailed all the leading facts of the case, and demonstrated the enormous profits which Sir William Chambers had already made, as well as those that must prospectively accrue from his architectural contracts, Miller moved for "a committee of inquiry into the expenditure of the sums voted for constructing Somerset House." The motion was seconded by Mr. Drake, who, jointly with his father, represented the borough of Agmondesham in the county of Bucks,<sup>2</sup> which town and its inhabitants might be considered as a part of their large patrimonial estates. I believe Mr. Drake, sen., sat in eight or nine Parliaments uninterruptedly always for that place. His son manifested great eccentricity of character and deportment, but his uprightness of intention, sustained by a very independent mind, qualified these singularities of manner. Pitt, who no doubt knew the royal wishes on the point, rising immediately, entered into a laboured defence of Chambers. He admitted, indeed, that the account of the sums expended by the architect ought to be without delay submitted to Parliament, leaving, nevertheless, the appointment of a committee of inquiry for ulterior consideration. Pulteney fearlessly expressed his astonishment and concern at the resistance to Miller's motion made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Such was likewise apparently the sense

<sup>1</sup> M.P. for Newport.

<sup>2</sup> William Drake, the elder and younger.—ED.

of the House, but the question not being connected with party, none of the Opposition members attended in their places. Miller had, in fact, addressed his discourse to empty benches. Pitt, though he professed the utmost deference for Pulteney's opinion, yet adhered to his own determination. Under these circumstances the mover himself expressed his readiness to withdraw the motion, when Mr. Drake starting up, protested that he never would consent to such a proposition. "I am," exclaimed he with much emotion, "*adamantine* on the subject." A division, therefore, took place, when Ministers were supported by seventy-six votes. Only twenty-one sustained Sir John Miller. Yet the triumph of Administration was merely a victory of numbers, and by no means a proof of opinion.

[*24th May 1788.*] The session began now to draw towards its close, and a prorogation would probably have taken place before the middle of June if Sir William Dolben, certain as he was of support from every side of the House, had not brought forward a measure for alleviating the condition and sufferings of the African slaves while on their passage to the West India colonies. Sir William joined to the mildest manners a cultivated mind and a most benevolent nature. The bill itself, intended solely for regulation, kept wholly clear of abolition. Pitt, while he reserved his opinion on the general question, yet admitted that, as during the intervening months between the present and the ensuing session, the hardships endured by the slaves during the voyage might be aggravated, a sufficient parliamentary ground had been stated for enacting a temporary law. On that principle only, which might be esteemed more a moral and humane impulse or conviction than the basis of a political measure, he said it should receive his support.

Scarcely any opposition was exhibited on the occasion, but a few days afterwards Lord Penrhyn peremptorily denied the cruel practices asserted to prevail on board the slave ships, all which stories he declared to be founded in calumny, ignorance, and defamation.

[28th May 1788.] Impediments to the bill arose, however, from a variety of other quarters. Not only Liverpool but London petitioned to be heard against it by counsel. Sir William Dolben, in a manner equally temperate and convincing, stated its object, limited exclusively to ameliorating the treatment and regulating the number of the unhappy captives during their voyage across the Atlantic. The cruelties perpetrated he offered to prove by witnesses without number of every description. Lord Penrhyn, nevertheless, still denying all the facts advanced, appealing to the prudence and the policy of the House against their compassion, at the same time reclaiming loudly the faith of Parliament pledged to his constituents for carrying on the African trade, concluded by declaring that the merchants of Liverpool were determined on contesting to the last its principle. Pitt observed that no man could dispute the principle of a bill intended solely to protect from injury and outrage unfortunate individuals consigned to slavery.

Fox himself, while he endeavoured to defend Lord Penrhyn, did not sustain with less energy the proposed regulations, his enlarged and generous mind spurning, when engaged in the cause of humanity, all the little feelings of party. "With regard to the principle of the present measure," observed he, "I know too well the texture of my noble friend's mental formation not to be certain that he never intended to oppose its principle in the accurate sense of that term. It is the truth of the

facts alleged as the foundation of the bill that he means to contest. But how can any candid mind denominate calumnies facts which are stated by a member of this House, who expressly declares that he does not wish his assertions to be credited, unless they shall be confirmed in every particular by witnesses at your bar? I, for one, do assume the facts. The bill now introduced may prove unfit to be adopted. Still it ought not to be postponed to another session, and if upon examination it can be made applicable to its object, we are bound as men to adopt it." This powerful support from such a quarter proved at the moment irresistible. Lord Penrhyn, though unconvinced, yet attempting no reply, scarcely any further impediment to the progress of the bill was experienced during the course of that evening.

Impey, who had been rescued rather than acquitted on the charge relative to Nundcomar, yet had still to encounter five other accusations, including a variety of heinous crimes or offences asserted to have been committed in his judicial capacity during his residence in Bengal. The second of these charges, commonly denominated "The Patna Cause," had excited the condemnation of Parliament when intelligence of it first reached England in the year 1779. An Act of the Legislature had even been passed for the indemnification of the unfortunate individuals who had suffered under the sentence pronounced against them by Impey. Sir Gilbert Elliot now moved to go into its consideration, but was stopped *in limine* by the Attorney-General, on the ground of the cause itself having been appealed to the Privy Council, before which tribunal it must speedily be tried and decided. This ingenious and timely legal device, by which Sir Elijah was again snatched from imminent danger of

impeachment, excited Burke's utmost indignation. In language the most intemperate, yet classic and elegant, for even in rage he could call to his aid the writings of antiquity, he accused the East India Company of gross collusion, fraud, and villany, in order to protect a man against whom they had originally appeared as prosecutors. Pitt supporting the Attorney-General's argument, and making some severe personal reflections on the conduct of Burke towards Impey, "I do not desire the right honourable gentleman," exclaimed he, "to assume the office of being my historian. I have suffered many harsh observations from his predecessors on that bench; but I have suffered more from his foul and offensive breath than from the aspersions of every Minister who has gone before him." The Chancellor of the Exchequer, though not usually forbearing, yet half apologised for any harsh or unguarded expression which might have escaped him during the warmth of debate, adding, "I have not heard as many Ministers as he has done, consequently I cannot remember the severe remarks which they may have applied to him. He has, however, sufficiently demonstrated his own oblivion of the severe observations that he has applied to other Ministers." The consideration of the "The Patna Cause," postponed for three months, was never again resumed.

[*June* 1788.] At the commencement of June a great promotion took place in the higher departments of the law. Lord Mansfield, who had long stopped the way, drew off. After presiding more than thirty years in the Court of King's Bench, enfeebled by bodily infirmities though retaining all the vigour of his intellect, he retired at length from public life. His retreat would have been sooner accomplished if he could have secured the succession to his office for Buller, one of the judges in

that court. But Pitt refused to hear of any conditions. The Chancellor likewise adhered firmly to Kenyon, whose deep knowledge of the laws, sustained by integrity of character, well qualified him for supplying the vacant seat. He was raised at the same time to the peerage. Arden became Master of the Rolls. In his person was exemplified the power of Ministerial friendship to supply every defect, and to conduct the object of its predilection to the greatest dignities, as well as honours and employments. The last act of Pitt's first Administration, in the spring of 1801, was to remove Arden from the Rolls to the Chief-Justiceship of the Court of Common Pleas. Nor did his attachment stop there, Arden being immediately afterwards created Lord Alvanley. His good fortune in thus reaching the House of Peers is the more remarkable, as he died just before Pitt's second entrance on office in 1804.

I have designated by the name of friendship the Minister's regard for Arden, because though he was not endowed with those great legal abilities which usually conduct to the eminences of the law, yet he manifested no want of talent, at least in Parliament. But to what cause except favouritism can we ascribe Pitt's predilection towards other individuals whom it might be invidious to name, some of whom he successively placed first at the Board of Admiralty, and afterwards at that of the Treasury? It would be difficult for Pitt's warmest admirers to assign any public motive or foundation for these selections. When he made of a country apothecary of Seven Oaks, in Kent, a Comptroller-General of the Customs, the cause was obvious, if not venial. He had obtained the hand of the Minister's niece in marriage.<sup>1</sup> For the Marquisate conferred on Lord

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Taylor, of Sevenoaks, married Lady Lucy Rachael, third daughter of Charles, Earl Stanhope, who married Pitt's sister, Hester.  
—ED.

Abercorn, and the rank of an Earl's daughter given at that nobleman's request to Miss Cecil Hamilton, as well as for Lord Carrington's introduction into the British House of Peers, there may have been solid and weighty, though not apparent or ostensible reasons. Nor do I mean to deny that among the long list of individuals whom he raised and employed between 1784 and 1805, the far greater part were men of merit and capacity. But Pitt, disinterested, elevated, and superior to injustice as he proved himself in general, was not exempt in particular instances from great prejudice, and as great partiality.

To return to the legal promotions at this period, Macdonald succeeded to the vacant place of Attorney-General. He has not, however, like Arden, ever entered the House of Peers. After presiding nearly twenty years in the Court of Exchequer as Chief Baron, Macdonald condescended in 1813 to accept a baronetage. By the transfer of Kenyon, Arden, and Macdonald, Scott became Solicitor-General. His rise resulted from a combination of talent, labour, and character. Neither noble birth, nor favour, nor alliances produced it. Pitt's friendship he indeed acquired and enjoyed, because he earned it by great exertions. Such were the qualities by which Lord Eldon finally attained the peerage, as well as the Great Seal, and such are the qualifications by which, at this hour, in January 1820, he holds his high employment.

During the months of March, April, and May, Hastings's trial had advanced by slow gradations, impeded at every step by the examination of witnesses and recapitulation of evidence. But towards the beginning of June, as the prorogation of Parliament approached, Sheridan felt that the time was arrived for his entrance on the theatre of Westminster Hall, and he had already thoroughly

rehearsed his part. Never perhaps was public expectation raised so high as on his appearance, and never, I believe, in the history of modern ages, was it so completely gratified. On the 3d, 5th, and 6th of June—for on the 4th, being the royal birthday, the trial did not proceed—he spoke during many successive hours. The audience comprised almost every individual, illustrious or respectable, which the capital could furnish, of both sexes, forming a most august, imposing, and interesting spectacle. Probably two-thirds of the English peers and peeresses, accompanied by their daughters, were present on the occasion. Even the season of the year, when the Hall of Rufus (across the gloom of which the eye could scarcely penetrate in winter) was illuminated by the beams of a vivid sun, augmented, while it displayed the grandeur of the scene. Every part of that vast edifice was crowded to excess.

Sheridan, accustomed to study theatrical effect at Drury Lane, did not neglect to observe its principles or to practise its rules on this great national stage, surrounded by all the rank, beauty, and talent of the metropolis. In fact, the majesty of the tribunal was half swallowed up and forgotten in the contemplation of the surrounding assemblage, among which females formed, if not the largest, at least the most attractive portion. To them, indeed, the orator did not neglect indirectly to address much of his discourse, more fortunate in that point of view than the great orators of antiquity, whose audience was exclusively composed of men. He enjoyed likewise another advantage above the accusers of Strafford, Danby, and Oxford, whose alleged crimes (domestic treason, or misdemeanours committed within the realm) limited the prosecutor to matters of fact, and admitted little scope for the imagination. But in the present case a wide field



of description expanded itself along the banks of the Ganges and the Jumna, while the subject, which depicted the woes of Asiatic princesses, was in itself well calculated to make a deep impression on the other sex. Many of Sheridan's pictures were likewise so highly coloured, and so magically wrought up, as to produce an almost electric shock. Perhaps a less diffuse oration, more subdued in tone, more compressed in its matter, might have far better answered the ends of justice. But who that knew Sheridan, his mode of life, his habits, his character, and even his manner of subsistence, could believe that he was solely impelled by the abstract love of justice? He embraced the occasion, as it allowed him to display his prodigious oratorical powers, while he sustained his party and gratified his ardent love of fame. His success placed him on an eminence which no public man in either House of Parliament has attained in my time. The most ardent admirers of Burke, of Fox, and of Pitt allowed that they had been outdone as orators by Sheridan.

[*6th June 1788.*] At the close of the last of these three memorable days, when the House of Commons met, subsequent to the adjournment of the peers from the trial, Mr. Burges, who had moved for the account specifying the mode in which the public money issued for Hastings's trial had been expended by the managers, rose a second time. He then briefly observed that no vote or declaration of that assembly had ever authorised the managers of Mr. Hastings's prosecution to employ counsel. Having next expressed his disbelief that there existed any precedent for it in our parliamentary history during the progress of past impeachments, he demanded whether peculiar circumstances of difficulty had arisen on the present occasion, that rendered necessary their employment. Whatever

egal doubts might occur, he said, there were to be found among the managers themselves individuals learned in the law of England competent to solve every question. In fact, three of them—namely, Adam, Anstruther, and Michael Angelo Taylor—had all been bred and called to the bar. With respect to the expense of the trial, he remarked that though it had been estimated only at about £8000, it already amounted to £15,000, and would exceed £18,000 before the end of the session. Burges concluded by moving, that “the solicitors for the prosecution do present from time to time an account of the expenses incurred at the bar of the House.”

Some moments having elapsed without any individual rising to second Burges’s motion, Burke presented himself to the Speaker’s eye, under great and visible agitation. “I do not mean,” said he, “either to second or to resist the present proposition, but simply to congratulate the mover on his having selected this glorious day, after the splendid exhibition which we have recently witnessed, when thousands hung with rapture on my honourable friend’s accents, for examining the items of a solicitor’s bill.” Then diverging to the oration just pronounced in Westminster Hall, he lavished on it the highest encomiums—encomiums unquestionably well deserved. Yet when Burke, after enumerating “the variety of information, the beauty of diction, the force of expression, the astonishing diversity of composition, and the numberless graces which met in Sheridan’s speech;” when he added, “the pure sentiments of morality with which it abounded,” many persons found it difficult to resist thinking of Joseph Surface in his own “School for Scandal.” Certainly the life and practice of the orator himself did not furnish the best commentary on that text. “Instead of resolving ourselves,” continued Burke, “into a committee

of miserable accounts, let us, like the Romans after Scipio's victories, go and thank the gods for this day's triumph in Westminster Hall. As to myself, I have been too highly strained, and my mind is not sufficiently relaxed after the sublime repast of which I have just partaken, to sink my thoughts to the level of such an inquiry." This beautiful description of his feelings recalls the attempt of our first father to portray his overwhelming emotions, when Milton makes him say—

" My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,  
Which it had long stood under ; strained to the height  
In that celestial colloquy sublime,  
As with an object that excels the sense,  
Dazzled and spent, sunk down."

Burke, nevertheless, quickly resuming his ordinary mode of expressing himself when irritated, added, "I disdain to notice the present subject. Call the solicitors to the bar and examine them. Meanwhile I shall order such services as I think proper, till the House may command me to desist."

Fox, with much more command of temper, admitted that the employment of counsel on such a prosecution was, he believed, new ; but subjoined his own opinion that their assistance was indispensably necessary to its success. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, conscious how delicate was his position—between the care of the public purse, over which it was his official duty to watch, and the danger of exposing himself to the accusation of impeding the trial—steered a middle course. "With respect to the number of counsel employed," observed Pitt, "I have doubted whether two civilians are wanted. Nevertheless, if the managers declare them to be requisite, I think they should be retained. Respecting the general expense attending the impeachment, that point, serious as it is, must be governed by due

attention to the nature of the case." Burges's motion still remained without any person to second it, till at length Mr. Drake, whom I have so lately mentioned, and who, when impelled by his feelings or by his principles, set at defiance all personal considerations, after concurring fully in the eulogiums bestowed on Sheridan's eloquence, yet ventured to add, that he must stand up the friend of economy. Sir William Dolben having first deprecated Burke's resentment, proceeded a step further, and seconded the motion. A division must therefore have inevitably ensued, if Dundas had not prevented it by a manœuvre. In order to extricate the Minister, his friend, from a situation of some embarrassment, he moved the next order of the day, which being acquiesced in by all sides, an adjournment immediately took place. The managers consequently remained without pecuniary control of any kind.

One of the most splendid instances of parliamentary, or, more properly to speak, of national sympathy and munificence, to be found in the history of mankind, was exhibited at this time in the House of Commons. That numerous body of men known by the denomination of "Loyalists," who in consequence of the American war had not only been driven from their paternal seats, but had beheld their whole property confiscated, necessarily looked to Great Britain for some remuneration. Though Sir George Rodney's victory over De Grasse, in April 1782, had restored our naval supremacy in the West Indies, yet the circumstances of depression under which Lord Shelburne signed the general peace with France and America, about nine months afterwards, incapacitated him from exacting any conditions in favour of these expatriated individuals. Neither magnanimity, nor pity, nor generosity could operate on the minds of their Transatlantic countrymen,

accessible only to considerations of the most interested or vindictive description. It is not on the banks of the Delaware or of the Hudson that, even in the nineteenth century, we can hitherto look for many of the virtues that elevate and adorn our nature. The arts of gain, and the science of naval warfare, combined with a grasping policy, such seem to be, down to the present time, the characteristic features of the Washington Cabinet. We may hope, and even safely assume, that the moral current will run purer as it flows on ; but not till another race of statesmen have succeeded to the Jeffersons, the Madisons, and the Munros, the servile instruments of Bonaparte's vengeance, or of their enmity to England. To return to the "Loyalists," technically so termed, Parliament having referred their claims to commissioners for examination, Pitt now proposed a plan for compensating the sufferers. The aggregate amount of their losses considerably exceeded two millions sterling, exclusive of nearly £500,000 already issued for their temporary relief. His intention, he said, was to liquidate from the public purse above £1,200,000 of this demand, the claimants being divided into classes, and receiving either the whole or a proportion of their claim, according to its magnitude. Principles of the most liberal, well-matured, and enlightened equity regulated the sums respectively distributed to the different individuals.<sup>1</sup>

The conduct observed upon this occasion by the chiefs of Opposition reflected on them the highest honour, especially if we recollect the acrimonious terms in which they were accustomed, during the course of the American war, to inveigh against the

<sup>1</sup> £500,000 were allotted to meet the more pressing cases of distress before the inquiry was closed. Subsequently £1,228,000 was paid.—ED.

Loyalists. Burke, rising early in the debate, declared that he never had given a vote with more satisfaction. "For though the objects of the present national bounty," added he, "have not a claim on us founded in absolute right, yet we are bound in equity and justice to consider their demands. It will form a new and a noble instance of public generosity. In vain would we seek for a parallel in our own history after the restoration of Charles II., when only the insignificant sum of £80,000 was voted by this House for distribution among the suffering Royalists."—"I rejoice that America has not enjoyed the distinction which must have resulted to her as a people and as a government from compensating the unhappy Loyalists. It would, nevertheless, have been a wise manner of setting up for themselves in the world." Fox even exceeded Burke in his testimonies of approbation to the measure. Throughout the whole discussion no difference of sentiment occurred between the opposite sides of the House, except a generous emulation to outdo each other in extending relief.

Fox's expostulations and suggestions even induced Pitt to yield on more than one point, and to augment the sum proposed to be given by Parliament. At the head of the list stood Mr. Harford, natural son of Lord Baltimore,<sup>1</sup> an eccentric nobleman, well known in the beginning of the present reign by the criminal prosecution which Miss Woodcock carried on against him. Mr. Harford had lost a princely fortune, or rather revenue, bequeathed to him by his father, situate in the province of Maryland. The Minister, convinced by Fox's reasoning and calculations, which other members sustained, finally consented to add £20,000 to the £70,000 originally destined for Mr. Harford. I do not recollect any dissentient

<sup>1</sup> This title, an Irish one, became extinct in 1771.—ED.

voice except one, namely, Hussey, a man most conscientious and most frugal of the public resources. Even he only expressed a doubt whether the claim of the "Loyalists" was founded in right, or was matter of mere grace and favour; for which hesitation Burke did not scruple to censure him. Such a donative, so conferred by a nation which had scarcely recovered the loss of her colonies, forms a glorious monument in the British annals, and stands alone in the records of modern times.

[10th—17th June 1788.] With the compensation voted to the "Loyalists" might be said to terminate the public business of the session. Nor would the prorogation of Parliament have been delayed, if the unexpected introduction of Sir William Dolben's bill for regulating the African trade had not protracted its deliberations. Regardless of all considerations drawn from policy, or from narrow views of commercial profit, unmoved even by the remonstrances and opposition of some among his own colleagues in the Cabinet, Pitt steadily extended his support to that humane and beneficent measure. To so elevated a line of Ministerial conduct posterity will not assuredly refuse their admiration. Every effort at procrastination was exerted by the enemies of the bill, who compensated for the paucity of their numbers by their pertinacity, the advanced season of the year offering them great facilities for prolonging or impeding the debates. In defiance of evidence the most incontrovertible, they persisted to deny the truth of the cruelties practised on the captives during their transportation, and the mortality consequent on such treatment. The facts, nevertheless, having been proved at the bar to the conviction of every unprejudiced person, the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved that "the operation of the bill should be retrospective, and that it should

commence from the 10th of the existing month." We must admit that such an *ex post facto* law or principle, if applied to ordinary cases, would be not only contrary to good policy, but even subversive of justice. Neither could it be forgotten that a circular letter had been officially addressed by order of the Treasury some weeks earlier to the principal merchants concerned in the African trade, assuring them of the determination of Government not to agitate the question of abolition during the actual session. Lord Penrhyn strongly contended that the present Act would therefore be an infraction of Ministerial faith, and when combined with the new regulations proposed by Sir William Dolben for limiting the number of slaves permitted to be put on board the vessels engaged in the trade, would operate virtually as an abolition.

A statesman of a lofty mind, of stern decision, as well as of unbending principles of moral action—and only such a statesman—would have ventured after this reclamation to take upon himself personally the responsibility of so strong a measure. Every motive drawn from considerations of a selfish or interested nature impelled him to postpone any regulation of the slave-trade to another year. He well knew that the Chancellor, whose intractability rendered him always difficult to guide, entertained insurmountable objections to the present bill. These objections Lord Thurlow was believed to have infused into the King, who from other causes relating individually to himself anxiously anticipated the close of the session. Nor was the Chancellor the only member of Administration averse to the proposition. Even among the persons seated near Pitt on the Treasury bench, connected with him by friendship, and acting officially under him, I know that there were enemies. One of them was Rose.



Dundas remained silent and took no part. Burke and Fox, after expressing their warmest approbation of the principle, left Pitt to carry it into execution. They had, in fact, withdrawn from the House, considering the session as at an end. None of these impediments could, however, shake his resolution. Rising towards the close of the debate, he not only declared himself unequivocally favourable to Dolben's measure, but expressed his firm conviction that the regulations specified would in no degree effect the abolition of the trade. "If, however," continued he, "such should be their operation—if this nefarious traffic cannot be prosecuted under the restrictions proposed, I now retract my declaration made on a former day against going into the general question. Late as is the season of the year, I am confident that the House will support me in my efforts to rescue those unfortunate Africans, now about to be purchased by British traders, from the jaws of destruction and from the iron hand of oppression."

This energetic declaration, which sufficiently proved how great a change of opinion relative to the African trade had been operated on his mind within a few weeks, terminated the discussion. On the division only five members voted against Dolben's motion, while fifty-six sustained it; and the bill having passed, was carried up on the following day to the House of Peers. We may confidently assert that no Minister who presided in the councils of England during the course of the eighteenth century, except Pitt, would have thus sacrificed a commercial, and consequently a political as well as a financial object to a moral principle. Every minor consideration gave way to the impulse of humanity in his bosom. Looking beyond the exchequer, he legislated as Plato would have done

for his ideal republic. Like Umbricius, he seemed to say—

——“Tanti tibi non sit opaci  
Omnis arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum,  
Ut somno careas.”

That neither Mr. Pelham, nor Lord North, nor the Earl of Shelburne, would so have acted in similar circumstances I imagine will be easily conceded, even by their admirers. If any individual in our own time possessed sufficient elevation of character and disregard of consequences to have emulated the same praise, that person was Fox. In correct moral deportment he could not enter into competition with Pitt, but his natural benevolence, enlargement of mind, fearlessness of disposition, and love of glory, would have impelled him to adopt any measure, however bold or hazardous, which promised to augment the sum of human happiness and to rescue his fellow-creatures from misery.

While I do justice to Pitt's line of action, and eulogise it as in my opinion it deserves, I cannot omit to mention another individual who highly distinguished himself on that evening. I mean Beaufoy, a person already noticed more than once in the course of these Memoirs. He spoke at great length in favour of Dolben's proposition, and though his eloquence might be criticised as rhetorical, florid, and diffuse, yet it teemed with information, while it displayed uncommon powers of description. I am persuaded that the appalling facts which he enumerated relative to the treatment of the slaves, and in particular respecting the mortality that took place among them during the voyage across the Atlantic to the West Indies, tended strongly to produce the decided part taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Beaufoy, arguing from disclosures reluctantly admitted by witnesses at the bar, or rather

extorted from them in the progress of their examination, carried the calculation of deaths to an awful point of magnitude.

Among the arguments used by the supporters of the African trade to justify its continuance, they urged the utter inutility of our relinquishing it, as we could not prevent other nations from carrying it on—in particular, France. But Beaufoy strongly contested this assertion. "Let the ultimate decision prove what it may here in England," observed he, "its existence among the French cannot long be perpetuated. Already not only the philosophers and men of letters in that country are earnest for its extinction; two of her most enlightened Ministers, Turgot and Necker, have recorded their detestation of its cruelty and guilt." Lord Penrhyn smiling contemptuously, "I perceive," rejoined Beaufoy, "that the noble Lord treats with levity my mention of literary men. Their influence must nevertheless be great among a people where opinion maintains sovereign sway. But does he not know that Turgot and Necker, and they only among the Ministers of Louis XVI., have exhorted their countrymen to reclaim their ancient constitution? Is he ignorant that at this very hour the voice of freedom has already penetrated the recesses of Versailles?" Scarcely thirteen months elapsed after these words were pronounced before the French Revolution was consummated by the capture of the Bastile.

[18th—30th June 1788.] I have already stated that Dolben's bill, in consequence of Pitt's decided support, having passed with a retrospective clause by a proportion of more than eleven to one, had been carried up to the other House. On its arrival there, it appeared, however, to be in imminent danger of rejection. Few instances have occurred in our parliamentary history, of a more formidable

opposition than it encountered. Nor did the obstacles to its progress originate, as in ordinary cases, with the regular opponents of Government. On the contrary, it experienced from them a favourable reception, while its most violent enemies were either members of the Cabinet or great officers of State closely connected with Administration. At their head stood the Chancellor, who not only declaimed against the measure itself as unwise, but treated the retrospective clause as contrary to the pledged faith of Ministers, and a violation of their own engagements. Lord Sydney, one of the Secretaries of State, whose connection by marriage with the Chancellor of the Exchequer formed his best security for continuing in office a single day, joined Lord Thurlow. The Duke of Chandos, though holding the employment of Lord Steward, yet spoke and voted against the clause. Even Lord Hawkesbury declared it most unjust to subject any ship to a legal penalty before the existence of the law which enacted the penalty. Against so numerous and able a phalanx, the Duke of Richmond was left to contend almost alone. The remaining members of Administration stood aloof. Lord Howe, who soon afterwards quitted the Admiralty, took no part. The Marquis of Carmarthen observed a total silence, and Lord Camden, I believe, never once attended in his place. Such was the state and aspect of the House of Peers when the bill made its appearance among them. It required all the noble pertinacity of Pitt's character, supported by motives drawn from some of the highest and purest sources of human action, to withstand, and finally to surmount, so great a combination of talents and of influence.

The Duke of Richmond, to whom Pitt committed the task of defending the measure, and who per-

formed it with zeal if not with ability, admitted that if its retrospective operation was permitted to remain, it would become indispensable to insert a clause indemnifying the persons concerned in the trade for any losses they might sustain in consequence. On a subsequent day he tendered a clause to that effect. But Lord Bathurst (who, though sinking under age and bodily infirmities, yet, as having formerly held the Great Seal during more than seven years, inspired respect when a legal question was agitated) maintained that no compensation which the Legislature could propose or adopt would meet the case. Two members of the Upper House, who had been elevated to the peerage by their illustrious actions, and the former of whom had witnessed the actual treatment of the Africans throughout the West Indies—I mean Lord Rodney and Lord Heathfield—denied the facts on the assumption of which as certain the bill principally rested. Among its most strenuous, though not disinterested opposers, might be reckoned the Duke of Chandos. In right of his Duchess, whose first husband, Mr. Elletson, had been Governor of Jamaica, he possessed a very considerable property in that island. Lord Hawkesbury moved, that instead of a retrospective operation, the bill should only begin to take effect from the 10th of June in the ensuing year, 1789. Throughout a speech which displayed much embarrassment, Lord Sydney endeavoured to reconcile his deference for Pitt with his opposition to the measure. While in language of admiration and respect for the motives by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was actuated, he did justice to that Minister's elevation of mind as well as purity of intention, he lamented that a subject of such deep importance should have been brought forward at so advanced a period of the

session. Yet, he added, however much he might regret the circumstance, and peculiarly its retrospective effect, nevertheless, as the bill had been brought in, it should receive from him no further opposition.

But all these measures of delicacy were spurned by Thurlow. Notwithstanding Pitt's personal appearance on the steps of the throne, the Chancellor, quitting the woolsack several times in the course of the debate, neither spared his invectives nor abstained from the most contemptuous expressions. The bill, he said, as it was drawn up, could only be denominated nonsense, and the amendments proposed, if inserted, would render it more incapable of being carried into execution. With gloomy indignation he levelled the severest sarcasms against the spirit of morbid or injudicious humanity which had originated such a measure at such a time. "I do not hesitate," continued he, "to declare that if the five days' fit of philanthropy, which has just awoke after sleeping for more than twenty years, had remained in repose during another summer, it would in my opinion have displayed more wisdom than thus to take up a business piecemeal, after publicly proclaiming that it should not be agitated at all till the ensuing session of Parliament." Nor did he fail to allude in language of strong condemnation to the circular letter sent by order of the Treasury to the merchants engaged in the African trade. Vainly the Duke of Richmond replied that the letter in question referred solely to the abolition, not to the regulation of the commerce, and therefore that no infraction of Ministerial faith had been or would be committed. "The noble Duke," answered Lord Thurlow, "or any other individual, may put whatever construction they think proper on the letter, I am content to understand it accord-

ing to the acceptance in which the persons take it to whom it is addressed." We must admit that throughout the whole proceeding Thurlow argued as a statesman, Pitt acted as a moralist. Policy alone guided the Chancellor, principle and humanity impelled the Minister. Posterity will judge between them. My admiration now follows Pitt, but I will candidly own that at the time when the events happened which are here related, I strongly inclined to embrace an opposite opinion.

[30th June 1788.] New alterations took place down to the end of June, when the Duke of Richmond brought forward the clause by which all persons who, in consequence of the operation of the bill, might sustain pecuniary loss were entitled to claim compensation. Commissioners named under the Great Seal were appointed to take cognisance and to decide finally on the justice of the demands made by the claimants. But here again the Chancellor interposed with numerous objections. A jury, not commissioners, he maintained, ought to assess the quota of compensation to be allowed the merchants. This opinion he supported with strong reasons, and no member of the Cabinet, except the Duke of Richmond, took any part in the debate. After demonstrating how inadequate, arbitrary, and liable to error or deception were the provisions of the proposed clause of indemnification, Thurlow added, "The warmest friend of the present measure cannot feel more anxiety than I do that it may not disgrace this House in the opinion of the country." Lord Bathurst concurred in all the Chancellor's positions.

A division at length took place, when Pitt triumphed by a majority of only two votes, twelve peers concurring with Lord Thurlow, while fourteen divided against him. So violent a contest on public

grounds between two members of the same Administration in one of the Houses of Parliament, yet not followed by the resignation of either, might be considered as a sort of political paradox. I believe it has no parallel since the accession of the House of Hanover. Its singularity is augmented when we reflect that one of the Ministers who held in his hand the Great Seal was by his office the constitutional keeper of the King's conscience, while the other presided both at the Treasury and at the Exchequer. Their difference of opinion produced, however, no ostensible breach, though neither of them was distinguished by placability of disposition. Mutual convenience smothered their animosity without extinguishing the recollection, but time matured these principles of disunion into a flame, which finally drove the Chancellor out of the Cabinet.

[*4th July 1788.*] The "Slave Regulation Bill" was destined to undergo fresh attacks on its return to the House of Commons, the amendments which had been made by the peers compelling Dolben to bring in a new bill. As the very advanced season of the year rendered it almost impossible to procure attendance for the discussion of a measure which, whatever altercation it might have produced between Lord Thurlow and Pitt, was not a party question, the enemies of the whole transaction renewed their efforts to overturn it. They were joined by a new auxiliary in the person of Gamon,<sup>1</sup> member for Winchester, whom the Duke of Chandos brought into Parliament, the Duchess being his sister. Delay, independent either of argument or of eloquence, it was obvious, would of itself frustrate all the Minister's plans. He remained, nevertheless, firm, determined as he was to surmount by perseverance every attempt of its opponents. No line of conduct less

<sup>1</sup> Richard Gamon, the younger.—ED.



decided would have proved effectual. Having demonstrated that the amendments and alterations introduced by the peers were obviously favourable to the petitioners against the bill, Pitt induced the Lower House to refuse hearing counsel. He concluded by moving to give bounties calculated for preserving the lives of the slaves during the voyage from the coast of Africa to the West Indies. All these suggestions meeting with nearly unanimous consent, the bill was a second time sent up to the Lords, where it experienced no further impediment on the part of the Chancellor. The prorogation of Parliament, which had been so long delayed, would therefore have taken place immediately, if it had not been discovered that an informality in framing the bill produced the necessity of renewing it a third time.

[*8th—11th July 1788.*] But Pitt was not to be driven from his purpose by any obstacles. The greatest difficulty consisted in procuring the number of members requisite for placing and keeping the Speaker in the chair, at a time when the session might be regarded as virtually at an end. Many individuals who commonly supported Administration were altogether inimical to the measure, and the Lord Chancellor had, even on the Treasury bench, more than one adherent. The enemies of Dolben's proposition might easily frustrate its success by merely counting the House, an immediate adjournment being indispensable if there were not forty members present, as soon as the circumstance became the subject of a motion. Even Treasury letters could not enforce attendance. Lord North, under similar embarrassments, would unquestionably have suspended the business till the following session. Not so Pitt. Sir William Dolben having moved to read his bill a second time, new petitions

from Liverpool, of the same tenor with those antecedently presented, were brought up, while Mr. Gamon moved to postpone the second reading for three months. On a division, thirty-five members supported the Minister, one of whom was Sheridan. Only two votes were found to oppose the measure. The four tellers completed the number to forty-one, being one more than was absolutely necessary to legalise the proceeding.

Before the House adjourned the bill went through the committee, was reported, engrossed, read a third time, passed, and finally carried up by Dolben in person to the bar of the peers. Lord Thurlow received it with indignant silence. All these steps took place on the 8th of July. No debate or conversation whatever arose respecting it in the House of Lords. On the morning of the 11th the bill was returned to the Commons, and instantly sent back in order that it might receive the royal assent, which was given to it a few hours afterwards. Then, and not till then, Pitt allowed the King to prorogue the Parliament. I have descended to these minute details because no feature of Pitt's political life places in a more conspicuous point of view the force of his moral principles of action and his inflexible determination to pursue the path which they dictated to him. The Slave Regulation Act, which was ultimately carried by thirty-five votes in a sort of Rump Parliament, laid the foundation of the Slave Abolition Act in the course of the following year.

[*July 1788.*] The court of peers which sat in Westminster Hall on the trial of Hastings did not wait for the prorogation in order to suspend their proceedings. As early as the middle of June they adjourned to the ensuing session, after having been assembled in their judicial capacity only thirty-five times during a space of more than four months.

Burke, Fox, and Sheridan furnished the principal aliment of the prosecution. The last-named individual, more master of himself than Burke, never borne away or convulsed by passion—an actor, even when he seemed to be most deeply agitated—Sheridan, while he shunned these extremes, as carefully avoided the repetitions in which Fox frequently indulged. The long intervals which elapsed between the grand exhibitions of oratory were filled up by the inferior managers, at whose head, *facile princeps*, must be placed Grey.

If the month of June had exhibited important changes in the higher offices of the law, July witnessed a similar alteration at the Admiralty. The divisions of the 18th and the 29th of April in the House of Commons eventually produced Lord Howe's resignation, and Pitt, availing himself of his complete ascendancy at St. James's, instantly substituted his brother, Lord Chatham, in the vacant office. He was then about thirty-two years of age. In that high, efficient, and arduous employment, notwithstanding his recognised inaptitude for executing its duties, the same paramount Ministerial influence retained him considerably more than six years. It is true that during the far greater part of the period the nation continued to enjoy peace. But towards the conclusion of 1794, the augmenting calamities of a foreign war, which demanded corresponding energies in every department at home, rendered it necessary to supply Lord Chatham's place with a person of greater application, if not superior talent.

After the termination of the second unfortunate campaign in the Low Countries, where the Duke of York commanded the British forces, his total want of military skill had excited such universal clamour that Pitt, however reluctant, at length determined

to lay the matter before the King. He did so, and suggested, as the only means of allaying the national discontent, to intrust with the supreme command a general of more experience, as well as more responsible, than a second son of the crown. But his Majesty replied, "Mr. Pitt, you mistake the matter. It is not my son, but your brother, who has produced the clamour of which you complain. It is the delay, mismanagement, and want of all energy or exertion at the Admiralty, much more than the errors or misfortunes of our arms on the Continent, which have involved my councils in disgrace." Shortly after this conversation, which was long and full of asperity, Lord Spencer replaced the Earl of Chatham as First Lord of the Admiralty. Pitt took care, however, to provide for his brother's comfort, as well as to retain his vote in the Cabinet, by conferring on him the dignified sinecure of Lord Privy Seal.

If ever any individual drew a prize in the great lottery of human life, that man was the present Earl of Chatham. Having been brought up to the military profession, he went out to America previous to the commencement of our contest with the colonies, but was recalled to this country by his father, who disapproved the war carried on for their subjugation. In 1779 he commanded the grenadier company in the newly raised Rutland regiment, crossed the Atlantic a second time, passed some months at St. Lucia and Barbadoes, and returned to Europe by Gibraltar. He told me that he rode post the whole way from thence to Madrid on his road to England. At scarcely three-and-twenty he had succeeded to an earldom, to a pension of £4000 a year settled on the title, and to the estate of Burton Pynsent. Lord Chatham inherited likewise his illustrious father's form and figure, but not his mind.

That present of Nature fell to the second son. There was a third, named James, whom I never personally knew, and who died at the age of nineteen in the West Indies, a lieutenant in the navy. The present Earl so strongly resembles his father in face and person, that if he were to enter the House of Peers dressed after the mode of George II.'s reign, and his head enveloped in a full-bottomed tie wig (as we see Mr. Pitt designated in his portraits), the spectators might fancy that the great statesman was returned once more upon earth. Rising above the ordinary height, thin, and elegant in his formation, Lord Chatham's air and address announce a person of rank, but his manners seem to prohibit all familiarity, and almost to forbid approach. Yet in private society, when I have happened to be seated next to him at table, he unbent and became pleasing as well as communicative in conversation. Constitutionally and habitually taciturn, cold, reserved, lofty, repulsive, his silence served as a mantle to protect him from close inspection. It did more, for it inspired respect, as though it concealed great talents under that veil. Many persons, indeed, have given him credit for judgment and capacity, but his whole life proves the contrary. Two vices or defects, each of which might render inefficient the brightest intellectual endowments, even if they existed, have accompanied him from youth to age. I mean insuperable indolence and total want of economy.

However incredible, it is nevertheless true that, while presiding at the Admiralty Board, even in time of war, he seldom was visible till noon. I might indeed say that he rarely rose from his bed much before that hour. Naval officers consequently found it difficult or impossible to obtain an audience. After he quitted his employment it became common

to call him in derision the late First Lord of the Admiralty. Even when commanding the British army before Flushing in 1809, his tent could not be entered nor was the general to be seen before a late hour. Of the talents attributed to him by flattery he has exhibited no proof. I believe he never opened his lips in the House of Peers since he first took his seat in that assembly ; but between 1784 and 1788, when his brother had him in training for high employment, he used most assiduously to attend the debates in the House of Commons, placing himself always in the members' gallery over the Treasury bench. It would have been fortunate for himself as well as for his country if he had never been employed in a military command. He possessed, indeed, neither activity, experience, ardour, nor any of the qualities that usually produce success. It is difficult to conceive upon what rational principle his Majesty selected him to command the expedition against Walcheren in 1809, for he unquestionably owed the appointment solely to the King, though the subservient Cabinet of that day improperly acquiesced in the choice.

I saw him embark at Ramsgate for Flanders with the Earl of Rosslyn and the Marquis of Huntly. All men of reflection anticipated the result of an enterprise conducted by such a leader. Bernadotte, who now sits on the throne of Gustavus Adolphus, of Christina, and of Charles XII., was enabled, by the delays and indecision of the English commander, to render Bonaparte an incalculable service in saving Antwerp. A general of rapid and decisive movements would have dashed up the Scheldt before the enemy could be prepared to receive or to oppose him. Lord Chatham's trophies were limited to the capture of Flushing. If, however, he gathered no laurels there, I have been assured that he made

a considerable sum of prize-money at Middelburg. Dalrymple's convention of Cintra, signed in the preceding year, had covered him, perhaps unjustly, with obloquy. Similar was the effect of the Walcheren expedition on the Earl of Chatham. He will no more indeed be employed again in the field than would Sir George Prevost if he were alive.

Lord Chatham's incapacity of restraining his expenses within any moderate limits tended, even more than his want of energy or activity, to bring him down from the eminence on which birth and fortune placed him.

[12th July 1788.] No individual about the court, or in either House of Parliament, felt probably more delight at his emancipation from the metropolis and from public business than the King. He had long anticipated, not without some impatience, the prorogation, which, contrary to general usage, in consequence of the delay occasioned by the Slave Regulation Bill, took place on a Friday. A principle of humanity in the present instance prolonged the session. It was a different motive to which Pulteney, Earl of Bath, attributed the meeting of Parliament on a Friday, when he composed his elegant and classic impromptu on George II. and the Countess of Yarmouth. During the spring of the year 1788 his Majesty, who had nearly attained the age of fifty, found himself attacked by symptoms of indisposition, which his physicians pronounced to be gouty. Probably the humour might have exhausted its force in the extremities in the shape of gout if his Majesty had ate and drunk like almost any other private gentleman. But his natural disposition to temperance, increased by a dread of becoming corpulent, and perhaps other apprehensions, impelled him to adopt the habits of an ascetic. The most simple food, taken in very moderate quantity, con-

stituted his repasts. Yet his German origin showed itself in his predilections, for sour crout was one of his favourite dishes, as Handel's or Mozart's music charmed him more than that of Pergolesi or of Paisiello. His ordinary beverage at table was only composed of a sort of lemonade, which he dignified with the name of cup, though a monk of La Trappe might have drunk it without any infraction of his monastic vow.

The King usually ate so little and so rapidly, that those persons who dined with him could not satisfy their appetite unless by continuing their meal after the sovereign had finished, which was contrary to the old etiquette. He was so sensible of this fact, and so considerate, that when he dined at Kew without the Queen, and only attended by two equerries, he always said, "Don't regard me; take your own time." One of them, an intimate friend of mine, relating to me the particulars of these repasts, which were very comfortless, observed, "We know so well how soon the King has finished, that after we sit down at table not a word is uttered. All our attention is devoted to expedition. Yet, with the best diligence we can exert, before we have half dined his Majesty has already thrown himself back in his chair and called for his cup, with which he concludes his meal."<sup>1</sup> Napoleon's dinners were, if possible, even less convivial and equally brief. He, whose hours decided the fate of nations, dedicated little time to the gratifications of the table. The late Marquis Cholmondeley, who had dined with him at the "grand couvert" in the Tuileries in 1802, has frequently assured me that from the

<sup>1</sup> "Now this, we are confident, never could have been related to him by one of the equerries of King George III., because the 'old etiquette' was not that the attendants should cease eating when the King did, but that no such attendants ever dined with their Majesties at all."—*Quarterly Review*, vol. lvii. p. 467.



moment they sat down till the coffee was served not more than forty-three or four minutes elapsed. They were then bowed out.

The late Earl Harcourt, who became Master of the Horse to Charlotte of Mecklenburg, was a nobleman of high breeding, well informed, and of a most correct deportment, though of manners somewhat constrained and formal. When he had the honour to receive and to entertain their Majesties at Nuneham, on their road to visit Oxford, his Countess, who was one of the ladies of the Queen's bedchamber, said to him, "My lord, recollect that as soon as the King lays down his knife and fork you must do the same. You cannot continue to eat after he has ceased." Finding nevertheless that Lord Harcourt either did not, or would not, attend to her injunction, she was obliged to tread on his foot in order to accelerate his movements. The Queen by no means resembled her royal consort in this respect. No woman in the kingdom enjoyed herself more at table, or manifested a nicer taste in the article of wine. In consequence of his Majesty's rarely drinking even a single glass, and of his well-known indifference about its flavour or quality, he seldom had any good wine, though he paid for it the best price. During several years the wines served at the equerries' table were very indifferent. As they did not, however, think proper to make any complaint on the subject, it might so have continued without redress, if by accident the Prince of Wales, while on a visit at Windsor, had not chanced to dine with them. The instant that his Royal Highness tasted the claret he pronounced sentence upon it. He did more, for he informed his father of the manner in which his wine-merchant treated him. The abuse was immediately corrected.

Two other motives, besides the apprehension of

corpulency, impelled his Majesty to practise unremitting abstinence. The first was a secret consciousness (which, however, he as carefully concealed as his grandmother, Queen Caroline, did her tendency to an internal rupture) that the disease which menaced him could only be repressed by severe renunciations, and that it menaced his head. Why else did he inflict on himself, before he attained his thirtieth year, the loss of his hair? We know that shaving the head is one of the earliest and most indispensable operations performed on persons attacked with privation of intellect. He did not, we may safely assume, submit to it without strong reasons. It is with probability conjectured that the disorder which seized him in the autumn of 1765, the nature of which was mysteriously held from the public, affected the brain. In order to subdue that tendency he thought no prescription so effectual as spare and simple diet. "Junius" says, in a note annexed to his letter dated "3d of April 1770," that the King was so agitated in consequence of the remonstrance presented to him by the City of London in the month of March of the same year, and so irritated at his inability to punish the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs for their presumption in approaching him with such a paper, as to have "been obliged to live upon potatoes for three weeks to keep off a malignant fever."

The second reason for denying himself any gratifications of appetite was his great aversion to confinement. The King was not a studious man. He neither liked books,<sup>1</sup> nor sedentary occupations, nor convivial society, nor places of public diversion, if we except the theatre; nor cards, till his augmenting defect of sight compelled him sometimes

<sup>1</sup> He collected one of the finest of private libraries, and took the greatest interest in its constant improvement.—ED.

to have recourse to the last-mentioned amusement. George III. never enjoyed his existence so much as when in the open air ; at times on foot, but generally on horseback, either following the hounds, which he did with great ardour, or at a review where he was always animated, or inspecting his farms, or visiting his various improvements and embellishments round Windsor. It was his delight to mount his horse before the equerry-in-waiting could possibly be aware of it ; often in severe or unpleasant weather, which rarely deterred him ; always at an early hour. One of his equeries has assured me that when thus surprised he has been compelled to follow the King down Windsor Hill with scarcely time to pull up his stockings under his boots. No place about his Majesty's court or person, so long as he retained his intellect, could indeed be less of a sinecure than the office of an equerry. The appointments were very inadequate to the fatigue and exertions of the post, a fact of which the King himself was so well aware that he used to say he had fewer applications for the employment of equerry than for any other in his donation. Returning late from his excursion on horseback, after a very short time passed in the occupation of dress, he sat down, surrounded by his family, at table. All indulgence he deprecated and avoided as conducting to certain indisposition.

Among the noble individuals who formed the establishment of the King's bedchamber in 1788 was the Earl of Fauconberg, sprung from an ancient and loyal family, though an ancestor of his had married one of Oliver's daughters.<sup>1</sup> Being constitutionally subject to a violent scorbutic humour in his

<sup>1</sup> The Earldom became extinct at the death of Cromwell's son-in-law in 1700. His nephew succeeded him in the Viscounty, and then *his* son was advanced to the dignity of Earl in 1756, in which he was followed by the Earl in the text. The Earldom expired in 1802, the Viscounty in 1815.—D.

face, he frequently had recourse to the mineral waters of Cheltenham, then a small, obscure provincial town of the county of Gloucester. Its spring, though unquestionably endowed with powerful and salubrious qualities, yet during many years had fallen into neglect. Lord Fauconberg, finding or conceiving that he derived great benefit from the water, purchased some land in its vicinity, where he constructed a house of moderate dimensions, which he named Bays Hill Lodge, situate on a gentle eminence about three hundred paces from the spring. The King, who usually entered into much familiar conversation with the Lord of the Bed-chamber in waiting before he came out to begin his levées, often made inquiries of Lord Fauconberg respecting Cheltenham. His warm encomiums on the virtues of the mineral water, as well as on the beauty of the surrounding country, inspired his Majesty with a wish to visit the place. Its privacy and simplicity formed additional recommendations. Lord Fauconberg offered Bays Hill Lodge for his reception, which, though not very capacious, might nevertheless contain the part of the royal family destined to participate in the excursion. The physicians who were consulted expressing no disapprobation, the plan was finally settled to take place as soon as the public business would permit of its execution. Unfortunately Parliament remained sitting, as we have seen, till the 11th day of July. But such was the King's impatience to begin his journey, that after proroguing the two Houses in person, and pronouncing a speech from the throne at three on Friday afternoon, he returned to St. James's, and drove down to Windsor. On the ensuing morning, before seven, their Majesties, accompanied by the three eldest Princesses, had already quitted the castle on their way to Cheltenham. They only

stopped to take breakfast at Lord Harcourt's seat of Nuneham, and reached Bays Hill Lodge on the same afternoon at an early hour.

[*12th—31st July 1788.*] Here his Majesty found himself, for the first time since his grandfather's decease, transformed in some degree from a sovereign into a country gentleman. No Minister or Secretary of State attended him. During near eight-and-twenty years of a stormy and calamitous reign, marked with the greatest national disasters, though set off by some days of glory, he had scarcely seen any part of his dominions. The Nore, Coxe Heath, Portsmouth, and Oxford formed almost the extent of his travels. At Cheltenham he had left a hundred miles behind him the

“Fumum et opes, strepitumque Romæ.”

His mode of living might be deemed patriarchal, more suited to the first ages of the world than to the dissipated state of society towards the close of the eighteenth century. He visited the spring at so early an hour that few of his subjects were found there to meet him. Constantly on horseback, when the weather permitted, from eleven till three, he sat down at four to dinner, strolled out like a citizen, with his wife and daughters, on the public walk soon after seven, and by eleven at night everything was as completely hushed at Bays Hill Lodge as in a farmhouse.

The King was not even accompanied on this excursion by any of his usual attendants, neither by a Lord of the Bedchamber nor by an equerry. The Earl of Courtown, an Irish nobleman who held the office of Treasurer of the Household, himself a man of very moderate faculties, but of polite and pleasing manners, followed his Majesty to Cheltenham by special invitation. So did the Honourable Stephen

Digby, Vice-Chamberlain to the Queen. They usually were his companions when he rode, but he delighted to emancipate himself from all restraint, to walk out alone in the fields, and to enter into conversation with the persons who accidentally fell in his way. He made likewise some excursions of pleasure and curiosity, particularly to Gloucester, where, when visiting the cathedral, he appeared to contemplate with much interest the tomb of one of his unfortunate predecessors, on which is extended his recumbent figure. I mean Edward II., who, after his inhuman murder at Berkeley Castle, was conveyed for interment to Gloucester. The King, Queen, and Princesses drove over, likewise, on a morning visit to the classic seat of Lord Bathurst, the friend of Pope, at Oakley Grove. But on that occasion, as on every other, the King invariably declined all dinners or entertainments. Lord Fauconberg himself could not have paid more assiduous attention to the Cheltenham spring than did George III. He drank of it indeed so profusely, and its effects on him were so violent, that many persons, not without apparently good cause, attributed his subsequent temporary loss of reason to the irritation produced by the waters on his nervous system.

The two representatives for the town of Windsor in 1788 were the Earl of Mornington and Mr. Powney. Royal and ministerial influence combined had recently brought in the former, on the decease of Lord Montagu, son of Earl Beaulieu, but Powney had not so easily obtained his seat. He successfully undertook, at a period when the King, in consequence of the American war, was very unpopular, to turn out Admiral Keppel, who then sat in the House of Commons for Windsor. Scarcely any individual could be more obnoxious to the King than was that naval officer at the time when the

general election took place, in September 1780, though within little more than eighteen months afterwards he found himself compelled to create Keppel a Viscount, and to place him at the head of the Admiralty. It is well known that previous to the dissolution of the Parliament in question, George III. indirectly canvassed many of the tradesmen at Windsor in favour of Powney, and his influence must necessarily have been great in a town where he so much resided. After a sharp contest, Powney only carried the election by sixteen votes, though the freeholders amounted to nearly three hundred. So efficient a proof of loyalty, exhibited at such a juncture, could not fail to make a favourable impression, especially as Powney was again returned for the same borough at the ensuing dissolution in 1784. The King on all occasions treated him with marks of familiarity and regard. His landed property, which lay in the immediate vicinity of Windsor, and was considerable, rendered him likewise an object of royal attention. Neither Nature nor education had set their stamp upon him as a fit companion for princes. His person, short and thick, was ignoble, his manners unrefined and rustic, his countenance destitute of elevation or expression, and his mind by no means highly cultivated. The distinction shown him by his sovereign procured him nevertheless a place in the "*Rolliad*," as the esquire of the commander-in-chief, Sir George Howard.

"Erect in person, see yon knight advance  
With trusty squire, who bears his shield and lance;  
The Quixote Howard ! royal Windsor's pride,  
And Sancho Pança Powney by his side."

Since the decease of the Earl of Pomfret in 1785, who was ranger of Windsor Little Park, the King had not filled up that office, and it was thought that he intended to confer it on one of the Princesses,

his daughters. But in the last days of July Powney was appointed ranger, with a salary of £500 per annum. His Majesty undoubtedly designed it as a mark of his predilection, and as some remuneration for Powney's expenses incurred by bringing himself into Parliament. The King did not, however, mean that Powney should consider the post as efficient, or that he should exercise any control over the park, having previously taken it into his own hands as a farm, for the purpose of agricultural experiments and occupation. Some time subsequent to the appointment his Majesty, accompanied by Colonel Manners, his equerry, on horseback, returning to Windsor, met Powney, whom he accosted, and they rode together till they arrived at the entrance into the Little Park. Manners holding open the gate, the King entered first, and Powney was about to follow, when the colonel let the gate fall, by which unexpected circumstance the ranger found himself excluded from the very park placed under his supervision. The King and his equerry passing on, he remained for a minute in silent mortification. Then turning his horse's head he retraced his steps homeward. Meeting Lord Sandwich, who was Master of the Buckhounds, Powney communicated the case to him, intimating at the same time that he should probably ask some explanation from Colonel Manners for thus shutting the gate in his face. "Powney," replied the Earl, "I would advise you to desist from any such intention; first, because Manners, who has killed one or two highwaymen that attempted to rob him, is not a man likely to give you any satisfactory explanation of the matter; but still more, because he probably either had the King's private directions for his conduct, or guessed his pleasure. Let the affair rest." The ranger followed Lord Sandwich's advice, who himself related to me the story.



[*August 1788.*] The political power possessed and exercised by Pitt at this time, placed him in a far higher point of security than any Minister of the crown had enjoyed, not only since the accession of the Brunswick line, but since the Revolution. In fact, if we except the Chancellor in the Cabinet, and Dundas out of the Cabinet, Pitt composed himself the Administration. His application to business, his renunciation of pleasure, together with his facility, rapidity, and activity in the conduct of affairs, enabled him to superintend every department. The formation of a sinking fund in 1786, followed in 1787 by the emancipation of Holland from the French influence, rendered him not merely popular—he was idolised by the nation. At St. James's he could dictate even when he did not persuade or convince. The King feared and respected him. George II. entertained similar sentiments towards his father; George III. lamented and disapproved the impeachment of Hastings, to which Pitt had mainly contributed. Even on the recent measure of the "Slave Regulation Bill," his Majesty would probably have taken part with his Chancellor against the First Lord of the Treasury, if he could have followed the impulse of his own inclination or judgment. But, on the other hand, the King justly appreciated Pitt's transcendent parliamentary abilities, as well as his services during the long and doubtful struggle with the Coalition. Conscious that whoever presided in the councils of the crown, he must yield to his Minister upon many points, so long as Pitt did not interfere with matters of conscience, George III. felt the warmest disposition to give him unequivocal support.

In the Cabinet he exercised almost uncontrolled authority. Bastard, by his repeated attacks on Lord Howe in the House of Commons, which ulti-

mately produced that nobleman's resignation, had in fact played into Pitt's hands, who filled up the vacant office by placing in it his own brother. Already the Minister meditated to change in like manner the two Secretaries of State, and to substitute in their places his most devoted personal adherents. We must indeed candidly admit that though in December 1783, when the country was in a state of convulsion, two individuals more proper for those high employments could not probably have been found on the moment than the Marquis of Carmarthen and Lord Sydney, yet in August 1788 functionaries much more capable might replace them. In the Upper House they were almost null. Lord Sydney had even ventured to speak, though not to vote, in opposition to the "Slave Regulation Bill." The Marquis, his colleague, who presided over the Foreign Department, rather belonged to the Shelburne school than to that of Pitt. He was besides, though not a man of superior talents, yet endowed with a very independent mind, more so than a Minister of Pitt's character might like for one of his associates in power. It was, however, necessary to wait for favourable occasions of displacing the two secretaries. Within ten months from the time of which I speak Lord Sydney was pushed out of the Cabinet, not indeed as the Archbishop of Grenada dismissed Gil Blas, by the shoulders, but gently—a bed of repose being previously prepared for him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—I mean the Chief Justiceship in Eyre, south of Trent. Mr. William Grenville was immediately made Secretary for the Home Department. Lord Carmarthen survived his colleague nearly two years. In June 1791 (before which period he had become Duke of Leeds) he formed the instrument of impelling the court of Berlin to adopt hostile demonstrations

against Catherine II. during the negotiations relative to Ockzakow. But when it was found necessary to abandon this line of foreign policy, rather than submit to the humiliation he threw up his employment. Pitt instantly transferred Lord Grenville (who had intermediately been created a peer) to the Foreign Office, while Dundas succeeded to the vacant Secretaryship of State.

Among all the members of Administration the Duke of Richmond manifested the most implicit deference to Pitt's wishes on every point, and seemed to be united with him by the strongest ties. Throughout the whole progress of Sir William Dolben's bill in the House of Peers, the Duke, like Abdiel, "faithful only he," while his colleagues either stood aloof or opposed the measure, defended it with his best exertions. The Minister had indeed paid dearly for his Grace's friendship by adopting his plans of fortification—plans not only very expensive but adverse to the genius of the nation, if not contrary to the spirit of the British Constitution. Like "the Westminster scrutiny" and "the Irish propositions," the attempt had only produced defeat accompanied with some portion of condemnation. Lord Camden, whom Pitt had created an Earl and made President of the Council, was, it is true, sincerely attached to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But that great lawyer had already passed the ordinary limits assigned to human life, and if the brightness of his faculties had suffered no diminution, yet his energies, intellectual as well as corporeal, began to feel the pressure of time. The Marquis of Stafford, who held the Privy Seal, might be considered as the least efficient of the Cabinet Ministers, and he had been throughout a considerable part of his life closely united with Lord Thurlow by habits of convivial and social intimacy.

The Chancellor remained during the recess that followed the prorogation in a state of sullen alienation. Pepper Arden's recent appointment to the place of Master of the Rolls, an employment so closely and personally connected with the Court of Chancery, furnished fresh aliment to his irritated mind. He held Arden in personal aversion, without respecting his legal talents or acquirements. Nor did he fail to oppose every official impediment and delay that animosity could suggest to prevent its accomplishment. But after a long and ineffectual struggle Pitt's pertinacity prevailed. Thurlow could not, however, be removed from the Councils of the sovereign like the two Secretaries of State. His talents and eloquence were indispensable in the Upper House, where he formed the only adequate opponent to Lord Loughborough. That necessity, and that alone, prolonged his tenure of the Great Seal for nearly four years longer, till in June 1792, Pitt, wearied out with incessant and acrimonious altercations which took place between them, having sent Lord Grenville to fight the Ministerial battles in that assembly, and having got complete possession of the Cabinet, ventured to dismiss Lord Thurlow. The Great Seal was then put into commission for a few months, till Wedderburn could be prevailed on to accept it.

The state of depression into which the Opposition was fallen as a party, in the summer of 1788, formed a striking contrast with the apparent stability of Pitt's ministerial power. Yet the lapse of a few weeks demonstrated how slippery are the foundations of ambition, and had nearly precipitated the Minister from his elevation. Burke, at this period, occupied as he was with the prosecution of Hastings, embarrassed in his private circumstances, sinking in years, and almost hopeless of any amelio-

ration of affairs, had become acrimonious in his temper and irritable in his manners. Sheridan, on the contrary, accustomed from early youth to subsist by ingenuity, placed at the head of one of the theatres, fertile in plans for procuring money, and not fastidious in the means that he employed to raise it, convivial in his disposition, universally sought after for the charms of his society, and always extinguishing his cares in wine, seemed, like Teucer, to exclaim when looking round on his companions in political misfortune—

“O fortes, pejoraque passi  
Mecum sæpe viri, nunc vino pellite curas !”

His father, Thomas Sheridan, a man of eminent talents, but whose whole life had been a struggle for bread, finished his protracted career just at this time. Immersed as he was in pecuniary difficulties, he must yet have derived no ordinary pride and gratification at having given birth to a son whose resplendent talents, collectively considered, almost threw into the shade those of every other competitor for fame.

Fox, after contending through five successive sessions against an individual whom his own imprudence had raised to power, and whom every revolving year confirmed in authority, resolved to quit for a time the scene of his own defeat and of his rival's triumph. He had only taken a hasty view of Italy when young, a country to which all his recollections, all his partialities, all his studies, continually re-conducted him. He determined to visit once more the soil which had produced a Dante, an Ariosto, a Guicciardini, and so many illustrious historians, philosophers, or poets. Already, accompanied by Mrs. Armstead, whom he married about five years afterwards, he prepared to set out on his journey, projecting, as he did, to pass the ensuing winter south of the Apennines. His health likewise, which

was much broken, prompted him to try the air of a softer climate. Before he left London he had the gratification of witnessing no ordinary victory over Administration in the return to Parliament of his intimate friend, Lord John Townsend, as member for Westminster. Pitt, when he gave his brother a mentor in the person of Lord Hood, no doubt had anticipated the re-election of that gallant veteran. But he found himself greatly deceived in his expectations. After a violent contest Lord John obtained his seat. The success was celebrated by every proof of party exultation, and the metropolis again exhibited scenes of riot nearly similar to those that disgraced Westminster in 1784. Unfortunately, too, the majority exceeding 800 left no rational hope of restoring Lord Hood by a scrutiny. The very name had indeed left behind it recollections which could not be pleasing to the Minister. Under these circumstances it became necessary to wait for the dissolution of Parliament before any new attempt should be made to replace Lord Hood in the House of Commons as representative for the City of Westminster.

His Majesty, after passing above a month at Cheltenham, during which time he indulged in a more copious use of the mineral waters than prudence would have dictated, returned with the royal family to Windsor. Previous to his departure, as he had visited Gloucester in July, so he made an excursion in August to Worcester. Besides the natural desire to see a place which might rank among the greatest and most opulent cities of his dominions, he was desirous of testifying his regard for the venerable prelate who then occupied the Episcopal See,<sup>1</sup> a prelate whom he would willingly have raised, some years earlier, to the metropolitan

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Richard Hind, Bishop of Worcester.—ED.

dignity of Canterbury. The King, with the Queen and Princesses, passed a night at the Bishop's Palace. On the following day he held a sort of levée there, previous to which ceremony, at an early hour, the weather being very fine, he went on foot alone to the bridge which extends across the Severn. The Mayor, Corporation, with many of the nobility and gentry of the surrounding country, afterwards accompanied him to the Guildhall. It is unquestionable that he displayed on the occasion an extraordinary elevation of spirits, attended with some striking peculiarities of deportment. Wine being brought, he drank one or two glasses before dinner, and appeared deeply sensible to the testimonies exhibited of loyal affection. As he became totally alienated in mind within twelve weeks afterwards, there were not wanting persons who imagined that the first symptoms of effervescence produced by the Cheltenham waters on his nervous system might be traced at Worcester. Soon after his return to Windsor the King celebrated with great splendour the Prince of Wales's birthday. Among the sons and daughters of the crown who assisted at that ceremony was Prince William Henry, third in order of birth. Having been destined by his father for the naval service, he had proceeded when very young to America and the West Indies as a midshipman under the superintendence of Admiral Digby. There he soon gave proof, not only of personal courage but of ardour and capacity. No Prince of England since James, Duke of York (afterwards James II.), had been brought up to the sea.

Having completed about this time his twenty-third year, he expressed much impatience to be created a peer as his elder brother, Frederick, had been on attaining to the age of majority. In-

dependent, however, of the Duke of York's greater proximity to the throne, his Majesty always felt a degree of predilection for his second son. He likewise knew or believed that the Prince of Wales possessed or exercised a great ascendant over the mind of William Henry. These motives, together with a reluctance to augment the pecuniary pressure of the royal family on the nation, induced the King to reject the importunate solicitations made to him on the subject. Mortified at the denial, and naturally anxious to perform some public part upon the great political theatre of the world, the Prince determined, if he could not take his seat among the peers, at least to reach the Lower House. With that view, in the anticipation of an approaching dissolution of Parliament, he took measures for procuring his return as one of the members for Totness in the county of Devon. Probably such an election, if it had ever taken place, would have been pronounced invalid and null by the House of Commons. But the experiment was not made. About nine months after the time of which I speak, in May 1789, George III. created him Duke of Clarence, observing, as I have been assured, at the moment when he signed the patent, "I well know that it is another vote added to Opposition." I may here remark that though the title of York has, ever since the accession of the House of Tudor, been uniformly conferred on the second son of the sovereign, yet it was otherwise under the Plantagenets. Edward III. made his second son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, while his fourth son, Edmund, received the dukedom of York—not indeed from the King his father, but from Richard II. Henry IV. gave in like manner to Thomas, his second son, the dukedom of Clarence. Since the weak, imprudent, unfortunate George, Duke of



Clarence, next brother to Edward IV., whom we assume to have been drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine in 1478, no prince of the blood had been invested with the title. Charles I., who had three sons, created the third, Henry, Duke of Gloucester, not of Clarence. A circumstance still more singular is that no such place or county as Clarence exists within the realm of England. I believe antiquaries agree in asserting that it is from the town of Clare in Suffolk, or from the territory adjoining, the dukedom derives its origin.<sup>1</sup>

[*September 1788.*] I set out for Paris early in September, and did not return to England before the ensuing month. Previous to my leaving London died the Duke of Manchester after a short but severe indisposition. The Opposition lost in him a steady adherent. His person and manners were most dignified, but neither his abilities nor his fortune corresponded with his figure. On the first day of Hastings's trial, which took place, as we have seen, towards the middle of February, the Duke attended in Westminster Hall. Before he quitted that edifice he experienced a sensation of a paralytic nature in one of his arms, which he attributed, probably with reason, to the damp, noxious vapour that pervaded the whole building. Having in the course of the summer visited Brighthelmstone for the benefit of his health, he committed the imprudence of seating himself on the turf, the weather being fine, in order to enjoy the spectacle of a cricket match played on the Steyne. A violent fever which ensued carried him off within two or three days.

<sup>1</sup> For an article on "Clarence," the origin and bearers of the title, &c., by the Rev. Thomas Parkinson, see "The Antiquary," vol. v. p. 60 (1882).—ED.

The short Administration of the Archbishop of Sens, from whose supposed talents great expectations were originally entertained, but who only aggravated the national calamities, was already terminated before I reached the French capital, and Necker had resumed his place in the councils of the crown. The effervescence which pervaded the public mind, the deficiency in the revenue, and the contending parties in the Cabinet, all portended some impending convulsion. A free constitution was demanded from every quarter of France. So universal and so violent was this reclamation that neither Henry IV. nor Louis XIV. could have successfully opposed the will of the nation. But a free constitution might have been conceded to the people without producing disorganisation or revolution. So well cemented was the French monarchy, and so deeply rooted in long prescription was the Capetian dynasty by a lapse of nearly 800 years, that no sovereign of ordinary vigour could have been dethroned. Louis XV., indolent, dissolute, and feeble as he was, would not have tamely resigned his throat to the knife. He would have resisted at some point of the contest. But his grandson, with the most benign intentions, allowed insurrection to organise itself, and to proceed unopposed through every gradation of enormous crime, till he fell under the stroke of the guillotine.

One of the last exhibitions of royal magnificence which the French court displayed previous to its fall took place a short time before my arrival at Paris. I mean the ceremony attending the presentation of Tippoo Sultan's ambassadors to Louis XVI. Versailles became the scene of this splendid spectacle, as it had been seventy-four years earlier of the reception given by Louis XIV., a

short time preceding his decease, to the ambassadors of Siam. Tippoo, one of the most enterprising, active, and warlike princes who has arisen in the East during the course of the eighteenth century, though, as we must admit, one of the most imprudent, the Mithridates of our time, impelled by his inextinguishable enmity to the English name and nation, meditated (like the King of Pontus in antiquity) to renew the struggle against his powerful opponents. This object, which was never absent from his mind, induced him to send an embassy to France charged with presents of the most costly nature. Nor can it be doubted, that if the calamities which soon afterwards swallowed up the French monarchy had not intervened, we should have witnessed a new contest in the centre of Hindostan, where the armies of Louis XVI. and those of the Sultan of Mysore would have acted in concert. The Queen, who had not then completed her thirty-third year, decorated on the occasion with the finest diamonds of the crown, herself the most majestic and graceful princess in Europe, was present at the reception of the Asiatic ambassadors. So were the Count de Provence, afterwards Louis XVIII., and his brother, Count d'Artois, with their consorts, accompanied by the heroic Elizabeth of France, sister to the King, who perished five years later on the scaffold. Philip, Duke of Orleans, labouring at that time under his sovereign's displeasure, and already engaged in those criminal machinations which burst out within twelve months, absented himself. Tippoo's ambassadors continued at Paris during some weeks, and were treated with distinguished honours, but their master derived little or no benefit from a mission so expensive, which, under more propitious circumstances, might have subsequently changed the face of affairs in Asia.

[1st—15th October 1788.] While the French capital presented every symptom of approaching commotion, London exhibited at the beginning of October a political calm. His Majesty, who appeared to enjoy perfect health, came up weekly from Windsor, and held his levées at St. James's with his accustomed regularity. If in the interior of his family he ever betrayed any indications of an eccentric or a disordered mind, these ebullitions were so carefully concealed as not to become known beyond the limits of his residence. Such was the tranquil aspect of this country while the far greater part of the Continent had already become a scene of war and devastation. In the Netherlands scarcely were the Flemings prevented from rising in open insurrection against Joseph II., while that restless and injudicious prince, insensible to the dictates of prudence, pursued his ambitious but ruinous projects of aggrandisement on the Lower Danube. Surrendering his Councils to the direction of Potemkin and of Catherine II., intent only on conquests in Servia and Bosnia, anxious to acquire the fortress of Belgrade, directing his armies in person like Frederick II., but wholly destitute of Frederick's military talents, Joseph had nearly subverted the Austrian monarchy.

At a time when France was menaced with revolution, when the Low Countries hardly acknowledged his supremacy, and Hungary might from day to day throw off all subjection, he persisted in prosecuting hostilities against the Turks. Never were the Austrian arms subjected to more humiliating as well as sanguinary defeats while contending against the Ottomans, than throughout the campaign of 1788. If the Turkish throne had been then filled by an active, warlike, and enterprising Sultan, by a Mahomet II., a Selim I., or a Solyman II., all Hungary

and Transylvania must probably have passed again under the Mahometan yoke. Joseph, broken in health, irritated in his temper, and sunk in reputation, at length quitted the camp and retired to Vienna. As it was said of his ancestor the Emperor Charles V., when he regained the Spanish shore after his ill-timed and unfortunate expedition against Algiers in 1541, "*qu'il étoit allé enterrer son honneur en Espagne, morte en Afrique,*" so might it with equal truth have been applied to Joseph that he was gone to bury his honour in Austria which had expired in Hungary. Happily his reign drew towards its termination.

If that prince became the victim of his Muscovite connection, his ally, Catherine, succeeded far better in her enterprises along the shore of the Euxine. Potemkin, by a desperate act of fortunate valour, made himself master of Ockzakow. But previous to its capture a most formidable opponent had appeared at the other extremity of Europe, who threatened to set limits to the Empress's thirst of dominion. Gustavus III., to whom I allude, must be ranked, notwithstanding his vices, among the greatest princes who have reigned in Sweden. He possessed courage and talents, military as well as civil, which, if they had been seconded by his subjects and his soldiery, might have retrieved, at least in part, the calamities inflicted on the Swedes by Charles XII.'s insatiate ambition. After emancipating the royal authority from the state of degradation to which it had been reduced under his two immediate predecessors, Gustavus undertook to carry war to the city of Petersburgh itself. Nor would the attempt, however hazardous, have failed, if the Empress had not corrupted both his senate and his army, while she induced the Danes to invade Sweden on the side of Gottenburg. The

efforts made by Gustavus under these circumstances excite just admiration. His uncle, "the great Frederick," scarcely exerted energies more conspicuous during the memorable campaign of 1757. The insubordination of Gustavus's forces in Finland, who when within so short a distance of the Russian capital as to allow the noise of his cannon to be there heard, nevertheless refused to advance or to draw their swords in his cause, compelled him to return to Stockholm. There new dangers and difficulties awaited him. The Senate, profiting by his absence, had assumed all the functions of government. Count Razamowsky, Catherine's ambassador, dictated his mistress's pleasure to that factious, venal, and unprincipled assembly, but Gustavus, by an eloquent appeal to the burghers, dissipated their machinations.

The Danish auxiliaries of Catherine had meanwhile advanced almost unopposed to the gates of Gottenburg. Gustavus, imitating the founder of the House of Vasa, descended, like him, into the mines of Dalecarlia, in order to rouse the rude inhabitants of those subterranean abodes to the defence of their country. Nor were his exertions unsuccessful in awakening their loyalty. They formed a body of 3000 men for his protection. Gustavus's efforts must nevertheless still have proved unavailing to rescue himself and Sweden from foreign enemies, unless he could preserve Gottenburg. In order to effect it, he was compelled to traverse the central provinces of his kingdom (precisely as Charles XII. did those of Germany in 1714, on his return from Demotica to Stralsund), unaccompanied, travelling by night as well as by day, mounted on a common post-horse, liable at any moment to be intercepted by the Danish parties scattered over the open country. Already the Governor of Gottenburg prepared to

capitulate, when the King, having eluded all the dangers that menaced him, entered the place.

His unexpected presence, and avowed determination to perish rather than surrender, operated with electric effect on the inhabitants. Yet such was their defenceless state, that if no foreign power speedily interposed Gottenburg could not have resisted beyond a few days. Unquestionably, under ordinary circumstances, and in other times, France would have come forward as the ally of Gustavus. During successive centuries the closest political ties had subsisted between the courts of Versailles and of Stockholm. But Louis's domestic embarrassments, which in 1787 had compelled him to remain a passive spectator of the British and Prussian operations in Holland, incapacitated him in 1788 from extending assistance to the Swedish prince. France herself already approached the abyss of revolution. Such was the desperate condition of Gustavus at the commencement of October. Imprisonment or flight, followed in either case probably by deposition, seemed to constitute his only alternatives.

In this moment of crisis, Hugh Elliot, the British Envoy to the Danish Court, well apprised of the inclinations of his own Cabinet, and sustained by the Prussian Minister in Denmark, did not hesitate to pass the Sound and to join Gustavus at Gottenburg. Since the decease of Sir Thomas Wroughton in the preceding autumn, the English Ministers had neglected to send any diplomatic representative to Stockholm. Fortunately Elliot possessed all the energy, decision, and spirit demanded for the King of Sweden's preservation. "I found Gustavus," said Elliot to me, when relating the fact, "in circumstances so distressing, that notwithstanding his determination to resist as long as possible, he nevertheless regarded himself as nearly dethroned. He

even held a small vessel ready in the harbour of Gottenburg, on which he intended to embark at the last extremity, and his resolution was taken to retire to Italy. I said to him, 'Sire, prêtez-moi votre couronne, et je vous la rendrai au bout de vingt-quatre heures.'" Gustavus did not hesitate in intrusting the interests of Sweden, as well as his own, to Elliot's zeal and ability, who instantly opened a negotiation with Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel, commander of the Danish forces. The prince royal (now Frederick VI.), then nearly twenty-one years of age, served under him as a volunteer. Prince Charles of Hesse stood in a very close degree of connection with the Swedish sovereign, they having both married daughters of Frederick V., sisters of Christian VII., successive Kings of Denmark. But he was not the less ardently engaged in the interests of Catherine, nor less decidedly hostile to Gustavus. It required all the efforts of the British Minister, acting in conjunction with the Envoy of Prussia, to effect his extrication, and to snatch Gottenburg from the Danes. A dexterous mixture of expostulation with menace at length accomplished the two objects, and replaced Gustavus on the Swedish throne. Within little more than three years afterwards he perished, like Henry IV. of France, in the midst of his own capital, at a masquerade, by the hand of an assassin.

While I am recounting these facts, in the first days of February 1820, George III. has descended to the grave. Never, I believe, did any prince—not even Elizabeth—leave behind him a memory more cherished by his subjects! Confined as he was to his apartments at Windsor, unseen except by his medical attendants, having long ceased to live in a moral and in a political sense, deprived of sight as well as of intellect, and oppressed under the



weight of old age, yet his people have clung to his memory with a sort of superstitious reverence, as if, while he still continued an inhabitant of the earth, his existence suspended or averted national calamities. This affectionate respect he owed far more to his moral qualities than to his abilities or mental endowments, and his long reign, if considered only as a period of time, abstracted from the consideration of the sovereign, presents a melancholy picture of enormous public debt, immense territorial loss, and most ruinous hostilities. Between 1760 and 1812, when he ceased to reign, a period of fifty-two years, we enjoyed scarcely twenty-four of peace. The decease of every other sovereign recorded in history labouring under incurable mental derangement, has always been considered as a consummation equally happy for the individual and for the community. George III. is the seventh Prince whom Europe has beheld during the last four centuries seated on a throne and alienated in mind. Of the seven two have been females, and three have reigned in our own days. Germany, France, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, and England have each in turn exhibited this painful spectacle.

The first in order of time, Wenceslaus of Luxembourg, Emperor of Germany and King of Bohemia, ascended the throne in 1378, before he had well attained to manhood, and, like Nero, at first gave hopes of many virtues. But they soon became obscured under the most scandalous and vicious excesses. In him insanity was produced by the combination of an understanding naturally feeble with furious passions and ungovernable appetites, whose indulgence rendered him frantic. Deposed from the Imperial throne, repeatedly imprisoned, and degraded to the lowest point of wretchedness,

he was nevertheless permitted to retain the title of King, and died in 1419 at Prague.

The second instance of royal insanity was presented nearly about the same period in the person of Charles VI. of France, a prince on whom, with more reason than on Louis XV., his subjects bestowed the epithet of "*le Bien-aimé*." Endowed by Nature with faculties adequate to the weight of government, a constitutional tendency to mental alienation, which appears to have been inflamed by a *coup de soleil*, terminated ultimately in madness. Under so severe an affliction he laboured during thirty years, not indeed constantly deprived of reason; for, like George III., he enjoyed intervals of sound understanding, relapsing nevertheless from time to time into total incapacity. Charles terminated his life and reign three years after Wenceslaus, amidst scenes of national distress and of personal destitution the most deplorable.

Jane, surnamed "*la Folle*," or the Mad, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, sister to Catherine of Arragon, Henry VIII.'s wife, herself the greatest princess in Europe, Queen in her own right of Spain and of the Indies, who forms the third example, remained in a state of incurable lunacy during near fifty years. In her it resulted from original weakness of intellect, aggravated by the untimely death of her husband Philip "*le Bel*," on whom, notwithstanding his indifference towards her, she doated with undiminished fondness. Immured in the castle of Tordesillas on the Douro by her son, the Emperor Charles V., from the age of twenty-four to seventy-three, neglected, forgotten, sleeping on straw, which she sometimes wanted, though her apartments were hung with tapestry, she expired in 1555, an awful monument of human misery combined with the highest earthly dignities.

Sweden offers the fourth instance of a crowned head bereft of reason in the person of Eric XIV., eldest son and successor of the great Gustavus Vasa. He probably inherited at his birth the intellectual malady which precipitated him from the throne, his mother having been confined on a similar account. Eric, who was deposed in 1568, after a reign of eight years, whose remaining life was passed in captivity, transferred from one prison to another, and over the precise nature of whose death a veil is drawn—like those of Richard II., of Henry VI., and of Edward V. in our own annals—Eric, ferocious, sanguinary, and cruel, as he ultimately became, seems, when not under the dominion of frenzy, to have been mild, tractable, and humane.

We now arrive at the present times. Here Christian VII., King of Denmark, furnishes the fifth exhibition of disordered reason among the sovereigns of Europe. It was neither constitutional nor hereditary in him. Excesses, followed by diseases, and the imprudent use of remedies, wholly deprived him of understanding before he had well accomplished his twenty-third year. From 1772 down to 1808, when he ceased to exist, Christian remained the victim of debilities, mental and corporeal, the most humiliating and incurable in their nature. If I do not relate the particulars of his condition, it is not because I am unacquainted with them, but from motives of delicacy and concern.

Widely different were the causes which deprived of intellect Maria, Queen of Portugal, a princess endowed with many virtues, animated by the best intentions towards her people, and by no means destitute of qualities or talents worthy a throne. Superstition, combining with a melancholy temperament, overturned her mind. She forms the sixth in this list. Dr. Willis, who was principally instru-

mental in restoring George III. to health, and who soon afterwards visited Portugal in the expectation that he might effect a similar recovery in the Queen, found her beyond his art. Sir Sydney Smith nevertheless assured me that soon after she embarked on board his ship in the Tagus, towards the close of 1807, when she was seventy-three years old, she perfectly recovered her reason during about twenty-four hours, at the end of which time she relapsed into her former disordered state. It is an extraordinary fact that the two last-mentioned sovereigns should both have been driven out of their respective capitals about the same time, one by the English, the other by the French. Christian was conveyed into Holstein previous to the siege of Copenhagen. Maria, expelled from Lisbon, crossed the equinoctial line and found an asylum in the southern hemisphere.

George III., who closes this procession of kings and queens "beheld in dim eclipse," is justly embalmed in the affection of his subjects. Yet his reign may with truth be divided into two portions: the first, comprising about twenty-two years, from 1760 to 1782, during which he enjoyed little or no popularity; the last, of seven-and-thirty years, throughout the whole of which period, though the greater part of it was passed in war, his virtues have obtained for him a higher place in our esteem than any prince has occupied since the Norman Conquest. Elizabeth and William III. were sovereigns of much greater talents, so were Henry II. and Edward III., but beneath him considered in a moral point of view.

I resume the subject of Gustavus III. He unquestionably bore a strong resemblance in the formation and features of his character to his maternal uncle, "the great Frederick"—too close

a similarity indeed on various points. Conversing with Elliot, in March 1791, I asked him his sentiments respecting Gustavus and his two brothers, the Dukes of Sudermania and of East Gothland. "The King," replied he, "possesses great talents, capacity, and resolution, but his moral principles are most relaxed, and he indulges in scandalous irregularities of conduct. He is besides a comedian, capable of practising every species of artifice or delusion in order to serve his purposes. When his mother, the queen dowager, a princess of very strong mind, lay expiring at Stockholm in July 1782, he waited on her, embraced her, wept over her, and affected the most acute distress. She was not, however, the dupe of his pretended sorrow. No sooner had he quitted her bedside than the dying queen called for pen and ink. She then wrote these, or nearly these words, addressed to her brother, Prince Henry of Prussia—'*Les marques d'attendrissement et de douleur que le roi vient de marquer pour ma mort prochaine, ne sont que des grimaces. Il me croit à l'agonie. J'écris ces lignes d'une main mourante, et je les signe de ma main. Louise-Ulrique.*'— Prince Henry retains the note in his possession at this time. The Duke of Sudermania, next brother of Gustavus, has displayed eminent courage, energy, and activity during the late sanguinary war with Russia, when he commanded the Swedish fleet at the memorable naval action in the Gulf of Finland. I cannot speak in the same terms of Frederick, youngest of the three brothers, Duke of East Gothland. He possesses no capacity, and during the perilous crisis in 1788 he remained wholly inactive with his mistress at Stockholm." One of Napoleon's lieutenants now occupies the Swedish throne, to which he has united Nor-

way, while the weak and unfortunate Gustavus IV. wanders in exile over Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Elliot himself well merits a place in these Memoirs as one of the most eccentric, high-spirited, and distinguished members of the corps diplomatique during thirty years of my time. His father, Sir Gilbert, placed him in the army at a very early period of life, but as profound peace then prevailed he quitted the service, and, impelled by a martial disposition, made a campaign in 1773 under Romanzow against the Turks. On his return Sir Gilbert's interest procured him the appointment of envoy at Munich, and he was soon afterwards removed in the same capacity to Berlin. There I found him in the autumn of the year 1777. While I was in that capital, the American insurgents, who were then engaged in endeavours to procure the co-operation, not only of France but of other European powers, sent an agent, named Sayre, to the Court of Prussia. Elliot having received information that this man was in possession of the treaty recently signed between America and the Ministers of Louis XVI., determined to obtain it at all hazards. Availing himself of Sayre's absence, who had gone by permission for one night to Potsdam, he caused the bureau to be broken open in which the treaty was deposited. It was instantly copied and transmitted by him to Lord North. The servant who had performed the act (which we must own was not to be justified by the ordinary rules of diplomatic usage), Elliot immediately mounted on a fine English hunter, and in less than eight hours he reached the territory of Mecklenburg Strelitz. I have been assured that Lord North received the first authentic proof of the alliance contracted be-

<sup>1</sup> Gustavus IV. died, a citizen of St. Gall, Switzerland, in 1837. Bernadotte reigned as Charles (John) XIV.—ED.

tween France and America, not from Lord Stormont, then our ambassador at Paris, but through the copy thus obtained from Sayre's bureau.

That agent, on his return from Potsdam, discovering the violence which had been used, and its object, made loud complaints to the Ministers Hertzberg and Finckenstein, who presided in the Cabinet of Frederick II. He subsequently laid the matter before the King himself, demanding reparation for such an infraction of the laws, as well as for the insult offered to himself in his public character. Frederick, who during "the war of seven years," and even antecedent to its commencement, had considered every mode of obtaining intelligence as justifiable, and who had practised arts, or committed acts, particularly in Saxony, the most contrary to every principle of honour or of morals, for his own protection and defence, affected nevertheless great indignation at the conduct of Elliot. He beheld England engaged in a ruinous contest with her colonies, on the point of being attacked by France, disunited at home, and her councils destitute of vigour, or at least of success. Under these circumstances he manifested much displeasure, and was with difficulty restrained from ordering our envoy to quit the Prussian territories, or reducing him to the necessity of demanding his own recall. Not long afterwards, early in 1778, a French officer who was then at Berlin, being in company with Elliot subsequent to the departure of D'Estaing's squadron from Toulon for North America, put various questions to him respecting its supposed destination. The British Minister endeavoured by his answers to liberate himself from such importunity, but the other persisting at length observed to him, "*Voilà au moins un fier soufflet que la France vient de donner à l'Angleterre.*" This insult exceeded

Elliot's patience to support. "Et le voilà," replied he, "ce même soufflet que l'Angleterre rend à la France de ma main," at the same moment applying to the Frenchman's ear a blow as severe as he could inflict. The fact happened as I relate it, but I have forgotten how the affair terminated.

Elliot nourished all the Antigallican antipathies of a thorough home-bred Englishman, though his whole life had been passed on the Continent among foreigners. Being at the "Comédie Française," at Paris, during the representation of "La Bataille d'Ivry," a dramatic piece in which Henry IV., after gaining the victory, with a view to stop the effusion of blood, exclaims, "Epargnez mes sujets! sauvez les Français!" Elliot, who was seated in the "amphithéâtre," rose, and elevating his voice, cried out, "Ne vous mettez pas en peine! ils se sauveront bien eux-mêmes!" His character fitted him more for the camp than for the Cabinet. He married, while at Berlin, a Prussian lady of distinguished family, but it proved a very unhappy connection, terminating in a duel and a divorce. After passing more than twenty years among the northern courts, Pitt sent him as envoy to Naples towards the close of the last century. In 1808, when Bonaparte's power might be said to overshadow the whole Continent, and when the English corps diplomatique was almost expelled from every foreign capital by his overwhelming interference, Elliot accepted the post of Governor of the Leeward Islands, less, however, from choice than from necessity. "If I had," said he to a friend, "not otium cum dignitate, but otium with a potato, I would not cross the Atlantic." Fortune held, however, in reserve for him a much longer voyage. The Earl of Buckinghamshire, who had married Elliot's niece, one of Lord Auckland's daughters, and who was then President of the East



India Board, conferred on him the government of Madras. Returning from Antigua in 1814, he embarked for Fort St. George, and is now about to revisit his native country, after a career of near fifty years passed in public employments throughout almost every part of the globe.

[15<sup>th</sup>—31<sup>st</sup> October 1788.] Towards the middle of October, while the King resided at Windsor, his health first underwent a change, the earliest proof of which was his postponement of the accustomed weekly levée, but no suspicion existed in the public mind of the nature or seat of his malady. On Friday, the 24<sup>th</sup> of the month, he however again repaired to St. James's and held a levée. That he laboured nevertheless at the time under a degree of mental alienation became afterwards well ascertained. It would indeed seem as if he was not unconscious of his impending or actual insanity. Two days earlier, on the 22<sup>d</sup> of October, one of his physicians, Sir George Baker, first entertained a suspicion that he was not sane, and various singularities in his deportment were remarked by persons who attended that levée. His dress exhibited still stronger proofs of absence or oblivion. The Chancellor, who was present, having perceived the circumstance to which I allude, requested permission to say a few words to his Majesty in the closet. He then informed the King of the fact, who instantly availed himself of the communication. It may be confidently assumed that he was not of sound mind on that day, but he did not the less give away one, if not two regiments, before he returned to Windsor. General Gordon, a son of the Earl of Aberdeen, one of the Grooms of the Bedchamber, kissed hands for the seventh regiment of foot. I left London in the last week of October, on my way to Bath, stopping two days with Lord Walsingham at Old Windsor.

Vague reports of the King's supposed indisposition pervaded the neighbourhood, and a review, at which he had intended to be present, was in consequence deferred. These rumours, however, excited no alarm. Individuals of the highest condition, residing within a very short distance of Windsor Castle, who were accustomed frequently to see his Majesty, to hunt with him, and to be invited to the Queen's evening parties, entertained not the most remote apprehension of the seat of the disease. Yet it subsequently appeared that from the 27th of October he never had possessed his reason, though the disorder did not assume the form of decided insanity before the commencement of November.

[1st—20th November 1788.] But the subsequent week divulged the fact. On or about the 4th of November his malady became so serious that its nature could no longer be mistaken. One of the first paroxysms of his disordered intellect took place after dinner at the Queen's Lodge, where not only her Majesty and the Princesses were present, but likewise the Prince of Wales and Duke of York. On the 6th of the month, when all the royal physicians were summoned to attend, as well as the Ministers and officers of State, the King's condition was explained to them. The gates of the Lodge being shut on the same night, and no answers returned to persons even of the first rank who called to make inquiries, it was generally supposed that his Majesty had either breathed his last or lay expiring. Next morning the truth became universally understood, and as the duration of so awful an attack, which suspended all the functions of the executive government, formed an object of the greatest national anxiety, measures were adopted for satisfying the public curiosity. A Lord and a Groom of the Bed-

chamber remained in regular waiting at St. James's palace every day for the purpose. But the greatest object of embarrassment related to the proceedings of Parliament, both Houses standing prorogued to the 20th of the month, and no power existing in the State which could postpone the meeting beyond that day. Ministers, anxious to procure a numerous attendance, issued circular letters to their friends, stating the necessity of being present on the occasion. So did the heads of Opposition. Men of all parties hurried up to the metropolis in order to witness so new and so interesting a situation of affairs. I returned to London from Bath a day or two previous to the commencement of the session. The capital exhibited a scene of fermentation difficult to conceive or to depicture. Yet was it far exceeded during the last days of January 1793, on Louis XVI.'s decapitation.

Two singular circumstances took place early in November, both of them having reference to the 5th of the month. It being the centenary of King William's auspicious landing in England, the day was celebrated not only in London, but at Edinburgh and at Dublin, with testimonies of extraordinary festivity. Lord Stanhope, one of the most ardent and enthusiastic defenders of civil liberty who has appeared in our time, took the chair at the "London Tavern," where seven or eight hundred gentlemen assembled under the denomination of "the Revolutionary Society." On the other hand, "the Whig Club," in which society the Duke of Portland presided during Fox's absence from the kingdom, met at the "Crown and Anchor Tavern," where Sheridan, in a speech of great power, proposed the erection of a column in Runnymede, a spot rendered historically sacred by the signature of "Magna Charta." This proposition, made after

dinner, when the company was in a state of exhilaration, met with the most favourable reception. A subscription being immediately commenced, twelve or thirteen hundred pounds were subscribed, and Colonel Fitzpatrick was appointed treasurer of the fund. Many persons nevertheless thought that the choice of the treasurer threw a damp on the patriotic sentiment exhibited, for, though Fitzpatrick's wit, gallantry, talents, and accomplishments were universally acknowledged, yet his aptitude for the office of receiving and accounting with the subscribers for their deposits did not excite the same conviction. Whatever was the cause, the momentary enthusiasm evaporated, and Runnymede still remains without any column or monument to commemorate the charter extorted by the barons from one of the most odious and vicious princes who has ever dishonoured the English throne.

The other event was meteorological. We know, by the concurring testimony of many contemporary writers, the sudden and fortunate change that took place in the wind on the 5th of November 1688, when the Prince of Orange arrived on board the Dutch fleet off Torbay—a change so propitious that Burnet says the lines of Claudian were applied to him—

“O nimium dilecte Deo, cui militat æther,  
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti !”

That historian was himself a passenger in the fleet which conducted William to our shores, and has left us the most accurate account of the fact in question. “On the 3d of November,” says he, “we passed between Dover and Calais, and before night came in sight of the Isle of Wight. The next day being the day in which the Prince was both born and married, he fancied if he could land that

day it would look auspicious to the army and animate the soldiers. But we all, who considered that the day following being 'Gunpowder Treason Day,' our landing that day might have a good effect on the minds of the English nation, were better pleased to see that we could land no sooner." The pilot, miscalculating the force of the wind, which blew very strong at east, found himself on the morning of the fifth to the westward of Torbay and Dartmouth. All was consternation throughout the fleet, as they must have proceeded to Plymouth, where their favourable reception was more than doubtful.

"But," continues Burnet, "on a sudden, to all our wonder, it calmed a little, and then the wind turned into the south, and a soft and happy gale of wind carried in the whole fleet, in four hours' time, into Torbay. Immediately as many landed as conveniently could. . . . We had no sooner got thus disengaged from our fleet, than a new and great storm blew from the west, from which our fleet, being covered by the land, could receive no prejudice. But the King's fleet had got out (of the Thames) as the wind calmed, and in pursuit of us was come as far as the Isle of Wight, when this contrary wind turned upon them. They tried what they could to pursue us, but they were so shattered by some days of this storm that they were forced to go into Portsmouth, and were no more fit for service that year." We cannot wonder that William should ask of Burnet, as he did, "if I would not now believe predestination?" The singular fact which I have to record is, that precisely the same sudden change of wind happened in 1788, on the same day and nearly in the same manner as in 1688. I was at Bristol Wells on the fifth of November, having gone there from Bath. The wind had blown fresh at east during two or three days, or in that direction.

During the day it fell nearly calm, and at night flew suddenly round to the westward, with violent rain blowing strong from that point, where it continued for some time. I believe the circumstance was commemorated, when it took place, by more than one of the daily newspapers or magazines. Though in consequence of the adoption of the new style in 1752, the Centenary Revolution had been advanced eleven days, and therefore was not complete in point of time, yet the coincidence of such similar facts on the same nominal day, at the termination of a hundred years, excited considerable attention.

[*20th—30th November 1788.*] The meeting of the two Houses of Parliament during a crisis when the throne might be considered as vacant, being contemplated with the liveliest impatience and anxiety, produced a very numerous attendance on the day fixed for commencing their proceedings. In the House of Commons, as soon as the Speaker had taken the Chair, Pitt stood up, and having alluded in terms of becoming concern to the awful and afflicting malady with which his Majesty was visited, a malady that wholly incapacitated his servants from approaching his person or receiving his commands, moved an immediate adjournment of a fortnight. The proposition was adopted without a dissentient voice, or the utterance of a single word, each side acquiescing from opposite motives. The friends of the Minister only desired to gain time, in order for ascertaining whether any beneficial change might intermediately take place in the King's complaint; while the principal persons in the Opposition, deprived of their leader by Fox's absence on the Continent, impatiently anticipated his return. Early in the month of November, as soon as the nature and the seat of his Majesty's illness became perfectly

ascertained, the Prince of Wales lost not a day in despatching to Fox information of so interesting an event, urging at the same time his immediate presence in London. As, however, it was altogether uncertain where the intelligence would reach him, or how soon, at that season of the year, he might be able to appear in his place at Westminster, his Royal Highness found himself necessitated till his arrival to consult other advisers. The members of the Coalition Cabinet, with the single exception of Keppel (who had been long dead), were, it is true, all of them in existence, and the Duke of Portland might be again replaced at the head of a new Administration, as Lord John Cavendish might occupy a second time his former place at the Exchequer. But Lord North laboured under the privation of sight, in addition to many infirmities, and though Lord Stormont possessed eminent talents as well as eloquence, yet he belonged not to the party of Fox but to the friends of Lord North. The Earl of Carlisle, who had held the Privy Seal in 1783, stood in a similar predicament.

Under these circumstances two individuals assumed the principal temporary influence in the Prince's confidential deliberations. The first, Lord Loughborough, unquestionably was one of the most able lawyers, accomplished parliamentary orators, and dexterous courtiers who flourished under the reign of George III. Yet with the qualities here enumerated, he never approved himself a wise, judicious, or enlightened statesman. His counsels, throughout the whole period of the King's malady, were, if not unconstitutional, at least repugnant to the general sense of Parliament and of the country, violent, imprudent, and injurious to the cause that he espoused. In 1793, when he held the Great Seal and sat in Cabinet, it was universally believed that

the siege of Dunkirk, one of the most fatal measures ever embraced by the Allies, originated with Lord Loughborough. Nevertheless, his legal knowledge, experience, and versatile talents, seemed eminently to qualify him for guiding the heir-apparent at a juncture when, if the King should not speedily recover, constitutional questions of the most novel, difficult, and important nature must necessarily present themselves.

The second individual who enjoyed the Prince's unlimited confidence was Sheridan. His transcendent powers, so recently displayed in Westminster Hall, combining with the conviviality of his disposition, and partiality to the pleasures of the table, were well calculated to establish him in his Royal Highness's favour. His influence, however studiously concealed it might be from the public eye, was not on that account the less real. Erskine, then Attorney-General to the Prince, and who has since held the Great Seal for a short period, occupied likewise very deservedly a high place in his esteem, as well as in his affection. The elevation of Erskine's mind, aided by the attainments of his comprehensive intelligence, personal no less than professional, entitled him indeed to be consulted at such a juncture. But his avocations in the courts of law left him little leisure for personal attendance in Pall Mall, and as he was not a member of the House of Commons, whatever service he might perform in the closet, he could render none in Parliament.

Pitt's situation at this period demanded not only the firmest mind but the most unruffled temper, aided by the soundest judgment. He beheld the edifice of his Ministerial power, apparently constructed on such firm foundations, menaced with speedy as well as total subversion. From the



first moment that the King's seizure was known to have affected the organs of reason, and consequently that a Regency must inevitably take place, unless his entire recovery and resumption of the Government should be speedy, his son and successor appears to have determined on an immediate change of Administration. Nor did he make any secret of his intention. Such a resolution, nevertheless, seemed equally contrary to prudence as it was repugnant to decorum, and adverse to the general wishes of the country. Even if the King had been withdrawn from his people by death, Pitt's dismissal would have been considered by a great majority of the nation as a calamity of no common order. But without waiting to ascertain whether his father's attack of insanity might prove only temporary, to begin at once by overturning his institutions and dismissing his Ministers (or, perhaps, more properly to speak, his Minister, for Pitt constituted in fact the Administration), was an act which excited not merely political but a degree of moral disapprobation. It will indeed readily be admitted that seven years earlier, in November 1781, after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, a different sentiment would have been felt under similar circumstances. A Prince of Wales who should then have availed himself of the power of Regent to dismiss the unfortunate conductors of the American contest, would have been hailed as a deliverer. But the intermediate lapse of time had completely restored to the sovereign the affection of his subjects; while Pitt, by acts of noble personal renunciation, by financial measures of acknowledged wisdom and public utility, sustained by councils not less judicious than energetic, had attained to a point of popularity scarcely surpassed even by his father between 1759 and 1761.

But Pitt had to contend with secret opponents in his own Cabinet not less formidable than the avowed adherents of the Prince of Wales. The First Lord of the Treasury and the Lord Chancellor had long ceased to feel those sentiments of mutual regard or cordiality which two persons occupying such high places in the councils of the sovereign might naturally be supposed to cultivate and to cherish for each other. Their tempers were indeed ill suited to co-operate for a length of time, though necessity and ambition had united them against Fox. Thurlow was sullen and often intractable: Pitt, imperious, inflexible, and dictatorial. Many causes had combined to widen the breach. The Chancellor highly disapproved of Hastings's impeachment, in which Pitt had concurred. His ill-humour was augmented by the obligation officially imposed on him of presiding in Westminster Hall during an interminable trial, compelled to listen for successive hours to Burke's and Fox's invectives, or to Sheridan's heartrending descriptions of exaggerated if not imaginary acts of tyranny, while Thurlow seemed ready to exclaim—

*"Semper ego auditor tantum, numquamne reponam,  
Vexatus toties?"*

The "Slave Regulation Bill," in adopting and forcing which measure through the House of Peers Lord Thurlow considered Pitt as having violated Ministerial faith with the mercantile part of the nation, added to the preceding subjects of irritation. Arden's appointment to the office of Master of the Rolls gave him likewise deep offence. In such a frame of mind it was natural for him to consider whether, if the King's recovery appeared hopeless, he might not retain the Great Seal under

a Regency. He had sat during the ten preceding years in four Cabinets politically opposed to each other, namely, with Lord North, with the Marquis of Rockingham, with the Earl of Shelburne, and with Mr. Pitt. Why should he not continue to occupy the same place under a new order of things? The Prince of Wales on all occasions treated him with distinguished consideration, and at the commencement of his Majesty's malady, as it became necessary to adopt measures for the preservation of his private property, the Chancellor had acted in conjunction with the Queen and his Royal Highness to that effect. So many concurring reasons or motives might incline him either to open a negotiation with Carlton House, or at least to lend a favourable ear to any overtures made from that quarter.

It is nevertheless probable that Lord Thurlow acted towards the Prince with great caution, until appearances justified a belief of the incurable nature of the King's disorder. But how little confidence Pitt reposed in him became evident when the Upper House met on the 20th of November. It was not the Chancellor who performed the principal Ministerial part on that occasion, or who formed the channel of public business. After the intellectual attack under which his Majesty laboured had been announced from the woolsack, Lord Camden, then President of the Council, rose, and concluded a very brief speech by moving (as Pitt had done on the same day in the House of Commons) that the peers should adjourn to the 4th of December. His motion was received in silence with unanimous acquiescence. Meanwhile the King's illness having assumed, towards the last days of November, a character of decided insanity, six physicians had been called in to attend on him. At their head

must be placed Warren.<sup>1</sup> He was then in every sense the leader of the medical professors, and he merited the distinction. Possessing great skill in the healing art, he was not less characterised by the pleasing amenity of his manners and the cheerful tone of his conversation, which prescribed as much to the mind as to the body. Enjoying a most extensive practice, principally among the highest orders of society in the metropolis, he had already acquired an ample fortune. Though his family was numerous, yet his ambition, unlike that of his Esculapian brethren, disdained a baronetage. Having successfully attended Lord North, nearly ten years earlier than the time of which I am now writing, throughout the course of a dangerous illness, that nobleman, then first Minister, offered to recommend him to the King for the dignity in question. "My lord," answered Warren, "I do not aspire to the honour which you have been pleased to tender me, but if your lordship will place my brother on the bench of bishops I shall consider it as an indelible obligation." The object of his request was conceded, and his brother, after receiving the Episcopal mitre of St. David's, was subsequently promoted to the See of Bangor. Dr. Warren's partialities decidedly leaned towards the heir-apparent, and his Royal Highness was known to regard him with extraordinary predilection as well as to repose the utmost confidence in his professional opinion.

Dr. Addington, father of the present Viscount Sidmouth, was called in, principally because his medical experience lay much in the particular species of disorder under which his Majesty suffered; it not being as yet thought proper to place him in the hands

<sup>1</sup> Richard Warren, M.D., born 13th December 1731, died 22d June 1797. He is said to have realised £9000 a year for many years, and to have bequeathed to his family upwards of £150,000.—ED.

of a practitioner exclusively occupied with the care of lunatics. Sir Lucas Pepys, with whom I have lived in habits of intimate friendship during more than forty years, may not, I am aware, lay claim to the highest place among the eminent physicians of our time. That he is, however, a man of sound judgment, an elegant scholar, possessing a most classic and cultivated mind, I can attest of my own personal knowledge. If in his professional capacity he had any bias, it was not such as actuated Warren. I shall have occasion, while relating the particulars of his Majesty's illness and recovery, again to mention both Warren and Pepys. Each became conspicuous from the different view which he took of the malady and its probable termination. The calamity, great and appalling in itself, was rendered still more painful by the distance of Windsor from the capital, and the consequent difficulty of procuring constant medical attendance. This circumstance determined Ministers to make an effort for bringing the royal patient nearer London. Kew appeared to combine the advantage of good air with proximity. The experiment succeeded. General Harcourt, then a Groom of the Bedchamber, now Earl Harcourt, and Colonel Robert Greville, equerry in waiting, brother of the Earl of Warwick, accompanied their master in the coach. The Queen, Prince of Wales, and Duke of York soon followed, her Majesty remaining at Kew, near the King's person.

From the first moment that the heir-apparent anticipated a Regency as almost certain, if not inevitable, he exerted every endeavour to secure the cordial co-operation and support of his brother Frederick. Meditating, as he did, to place Fox at the head of the Government, without waiting to ascertain the probable or final result of his father's malady, and aware of the obstacles which the

Minister might oppose to his intention, he manifested the utmost anxiety to prevent any discordance of sentiment arising in a quarter so near the throne. It might, on the other hand, have been naturally expected that a Prince whom the King had always treated with marks of great parental affection, if not with decided partiality, would feel a disinclination or rather a repugnance to overturn the existing Administration. His scruples, if any such he had, were, however, speedily surmounted. A promise of being placed at the head of the army, with all the appointments, power, and patronage of a commander-in-chief, effectually gained him over to his elder brother's party. I have already spoken elsewhere of the Duke. He was at this time strongly attached to a lady of my particular acquaintance, the Countess of Tyrconnel. She was Lord Delaval's youngest daughter, feminine and delicate in her figure, very fair, with a profusion of light hair, in the tresses of which, like the tangles of Neæra's in "*Lycidas*," his Royal Highness was detained captive.<sup>1</sup>

Her husband, the Earl of Tyrconnel, might be said to contribute at this time, more than any nobleman about the Court, to the recreation of the reigning family, for while his wife formed the object of the homage of one prince of the blood, his sister had long presided in the affections of another. Lady Almeria Carpenter, one of the most beautiful women of her time, but to whom Nature had been sparing of intellectual attractions, reigned at Gloucester House. The Duchess remained indeed its nominal mistress, but Lady Almeria constituted its ornament and its pride. Lord Tyrconnel himself had been early married to a sister of the Duke of Rutland, from whom he obtained a divorce in

<sup>1</sup> Lord Tyrconnel's second wife was the Hon. Sarah Delaval, daughter of John Lord Delaval.—ED.

less than five years. Not discouraged by so unfortunate a matrimonial outset, he soon ventured a second time on the same perilous experiment, though, as many persons thought, not with better success. His fortune by no means equalling his rank, Lord Delaval extended his paternal care over his daughter and her lord. In Hanover Square during winter, as at Claremont in Surrey during summer (a country seat which has since obtained a mournful celebrity from the Princess Charlotte of Wales's death), the two families formed only one household. The Duke of York was a constant visitor at each place, notwithstanding that Lady Tyrconnel's father and husband were both firmly attached to the Administration. Lord Delaval had received his British peerage only two years before from Pitt, and the Earl of Tyrconnel, who sat in the House of Commons for Scarborough, was elected by the Rutland interest member for that burgh.

[1st—4th December 1788.] Fox, so long and so impatiently expected, at length arrived. I believe he reached his lodgings in St. James's Street, contiguous to Brookes's, on the 24th or 25th of November. He had been nearly five years out of office. The account of his Majesty's seizure, accompanied with strong exhortations to accelerate his return, reached him before the middle of November at Bologna, and he lost not a day in compliance. Accompanied by Mrs. Armstead, he took the road to England through Lyons, where new and more urgent letters, acquainting him with the King's total loss of reason, induced him to increase his speed. For that purpose, quitting his female travelling companion, he proceeded alone in a French carriage to Calais. The construction of this hired vehicle, which was not so well suspended as his own English postchaise, together with the bad condition and

nature of the roads through the interior provinces of France at an advanced season of the year, sensibly affected his health. His personal appearance in the House of Commons on the 4th, when the adjournment ended, excited a great and general sensation. I never saw Fox, either previously or subsequently, exhibit so broken and shattered an aspect. His body seemed to be emaciated, his countenance sallow and sickly, his eyes swollen, while his stockings hung upon his legs, and he rather dragged himself along than walked up the floor to take his seat. The attendance, as might be expected, was numerous and tumultuous. Pitt having first presented a report of the examination of the royal physicians relative to his Majesty's state, as delivered on oath before the Privy Council, the document was immediately read at the table. He then moved that it should be taken into consideration four days afterwards, on the 8th of December, to which time he proposed that the assembly at its rising should adjourn. While addressing the House he likewise gave notice of his intention to move for a committee which might search for precedents applicable to the present calamitous situation of public affairs, and report upon it, adding, that too much caution and deliberation could not be adopted in a crisis of such magnitude.

The first person who rose in reply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was Vyner. He had been a member of several Parliaments, and in the preceding House of Commons represented the city of Lincoln; but after the total defeat of Fox's party in 1784, he lay under the necessity of bringing himself in for the Yorkshire burgh of Thirske. Vyner, who in his person always reminded me of the portraits of "Hudibras," was a Lincolnshire gentleman of



large property, endowed with very good common-sense, and of an irreproachable character. He descended, I believe, lineally from Sir Robert Vyner, Lord Mayor of London, of jovial memory, who, as the "Spectator" assures me, followed Charles II. downstairs after a city dinner, overtook and compelled him "to take t'other bottle." Mr. Vyner briefly expressed his doubts whether the House ought not to examine the physicians at their own bar before the report just read should be made the basis of a parliamentary proceeding. Pitt endeavoured, on the contrary, to show that the delicacy of the subject, and the dignity of the great person whose health it regarded, might induce them, without any dereliction of their duty or infringement of their legislative consequence, to rest satisfied with the report of the Privy Council. With this opinion Fox disagreed, inclining to adopt Vyner's sentiment, yet in language of the utmost moderation, and the House immediately adjourned to the subsequent Monday. A scene nearly similar took place on the same evening in the Upper House, Lord Camden again performing the prominent Ministerial part, while the Chancellor remained silent. By the report of the physicians it appeared that Dr. Addington, whose practice had been more among patients afflicted with insanity than any other of the professional attendants on the King, expressed himself in more sanguine terms than his medical brethren respecting the probability of his Majesty's eventual recovery. Above fifty members of the Privy Council were present at Whitehall during the examination, but as at least one-third of the number belonged to the Opposition, it was judged proper, with a view to prevent disclosures of an unbecoming nature, to determine previously the questions which should be proposed

to the physicians. The precaution formed a salutary check, and immediately after hearing the report read the peers adjourned, as the Commons had done, to the 8th of the month.

[*4th—8th December 1788.*] Meanwhile, his Majesty's distemper, subsequent to his removal from Windsor to Kew, not exhibiting any symptoms of amendment, but rather assuming a more decided character of insanity, it was thought necessary to call in a practitioner who had made the cure of lunatics his sole occupation. Among the individuals whose reputation was well established in that branch of the art was the Rev. Dr. Francis Willis;<sup>1</sup> for though he no longer performed any clerical functions, yet he united in his person the medical and the ecclesiastical professions. His residence lay in the vicinity of Boston, in the county of Lincoln, and he had attained, if he had not already passed, his seventieth year. Assisted by two sons, he had dedicated himself, during a great portion of his life, to the exclusive care of persons deprived of reason. I have been in his company not long after his Majesty's recovery. He seemed to be exempt from all the infirmities of old age, and his countenance, which was very interesting, blended intelligence with an expression of placid self-possession. When summoned to attend the King he readily obeyed, but he at the same time frankly informed her Majesty that if she expected any benefit to accrue from his attendance, he must be allowed to exercise the same authority which he should do over the meanest individual submitted to his control.

A proof which he displayed not long afterwards of skill, or, more properly to speak, of his empire over his patients, excited great amazement, not unmixed with alarm as well as admiration. The King,

<sup>1</sup> Died 1807, aged ninety.—ED.

who had not undergone the operation of shaving during more than five weeks, nor would submit to have it performed, yet expressed nevertheless a strong desire to shave himself. Willis gratified him in his wish. "Your Majesty," said he, "is desirous to get rid of your beard. You shall have a razor given you for the purpose." He instantly put the instrument into the King's hand, who went through the process with perfect success, Willis governing him by the eye throughout the whole performance. From the first day of his arrival at Kew, on the 5th of December, he not only declared that he entertained sanguine hopes of the King's recovery, but confidentially added his expectation of its being effected within the space of three months. The experiment of allowing a maniac to shave his beard, when we reflect who that maniac was, may appear to partake of temerity; nor could it have been safely tried under a despotic government, where the physician would probably have been sacrificed if his patient had committed violence on himself. When Dr. Dimsdale inoculated Catherine II. for smallpox, that princess—who, whatever might be the vices of her moral character, possessed a very magnanimous mind—took precautions for securing his personal safety in case of her death. Finding herself much indisposed on a particular day, she sent for Dimsdale, whom she had already remunerated in a manner becoming so great a sovereign. "I experience," said she, "certain sensations which render me apprehensive for my life. My subjects would, I fear, hold you accountable for any accident that might befall me. I have therefore stationed a yacht in the Gulf of Finland, on board of which you will embark as soon as I am no more, and whose commander, in consequence of my orders, will convey you out of all danger." This anecdote, so honour-

able to the Empress, I heard from one of Dimsdale's sons above forty years ago.

[8th December 1788.] As soon as the House of Commons met again, Pitt presented himself to the Speaker's notice ; more, however, for the purpose of ascertaining the wishes or opinions of the assembly respecting the proper mode of proceeding, under a temporary extinction of the executive power, than with an intention of dictating any specific measure. Fox was not present, being prevented by indisposition. Vyner, having a second time taken on him to open the debate, and calling on Pitt to bring forward some plan adapted to the nature of the emergency, the latter moved for "a committee to examine the physicians relative to the state of his Majesty's health, and to report it to the House." This proposition met with unanimous approbation. Powis gave it as his advice that the committee should be composed of members from both Houses of Parliament, but the inconveniences overbalanced the advantages of such an experiment, which, it was apprehended, might embroil the two branches of the Legislature, a calamity greatly to be deprecated at any time, especially when the royal functions were in a state of suspension. Burke pathetically adjured the House not to sacrifice any of their constitutional privileges, and least of all, the right to examine evidence at their own bar. Notwithstanding this exhortation, the committee was named and chosen. It consisted of twenty-one persons, the Chancellor of the Exchequer being constituted chairman. Twelve of the number were either Ministers or individuals who commonly supported Administration. Among the remaining nine, besides Fox, Burke, and Sheridan, appeared the names of Lord North, Vyner, Powis, and Windham. An adjournment immediately took place. On the same

evening, the Marquis of Stafford made a similar motion in the Upper House, and the discussion being resumed on the following day, a committee, formed on similar principles with that chosen by the House of Commons, and composed of the same numbers, was unanimously elected. Neither on the first, nor on the second of these occasions, did the Chancellor utter a word, nor even appear to feel any interest in the proceedings. As they did not emanate from him, so did they receive from him no support. His silence at such a time, while Lord Camden and Lord Stafford acted, each in turn, as the managers of the House of Peers, necessarily attracted observation.

[*10th December 1788.*] We now enter on a period, comprising more than two months, of greater agitation, violence, and mutual animosity than any other that I have witnessed in my time. The contests in 1782, previous to Lord North's resignation, and those which took place in 1784 between Pitt and the Coalition, however personally acrimonious, yet regarded only the possession of Ministerial power. In 1788 the throne was vacant, though not by the demise of the sovereign, and the question was by whom, as well as under what restrictions, the vacancy should be supplied. On the first point no difference of opinion could possibly exist, the heir-apparent being of full age to administer the Government, of sound mind, and present on the spot. But as to the second, namely, what conditions should be imposed upon him by Parliament while the recovery of the sovereign appeared to be probable, and perhaps not distant, very opposite sentiments might arise.

Pitt, appearing at the bar of the House of Commons, presented the report of the physicians, which was immediately read. They coincided in opinion

as to the probable recovery of their patient, though relative to the time when it might be expected to take place they equally professed ignorance. Willis alone, on whose conclusions more reliance was placed than on all the others, assigned the probable causes of his Majesty's malady and the probable period of its duration. "Weighty business, severe exercise, too great abstemiousness, and little rest, pressing with united force on his constitution, had," Willis said, "produced the attack." "The irritation," added he, "has in a great measure subsided, which symptom must precede convalescence. Nine out of ten among those who have been placed under my care have recovered within three months from their first seizure."

No sooner had the examination of the physicians been communicated to the House than Pitt moved the appointment of a committee "to discover and report precedents of such proceedings as had taken place, to provide for the exercise of the royal authority when interrupted by sickness, infancy, or infirmity." Hitherto, whatever hostile sentiments might animate the two parties who opposed each other within those walls, no indecorous external demonstrations of it had openly appeared. But the moment was now arrived when the most unqualified animosity succeeded to a temporary restraint. It had already been determined in the consultations held at Carlton House, where Lord Loughborough presided as legal guide, and on his authority, that "the Prince of Wales possessed an inherent and indisputable right to take on himself the Regency under the present circumstances." The time when he ought to enter on the possession of this right, and to exercise it, Lord Loughborough however admitted must rest for decision with the two Houses of Parliament. Such were the constitu-

tional principles laid down by Wedderburn, on the solidity of which Fox relied. Rising as soon as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had concluded, he expressed his most animated condemnation of the motion just made from the Treasury bench. "Why," exclaimed he, "and for what beneficial purpose, are we going to search for precedents? It is a mere loss of time and pretext for delay. There is here among us an heir-apparent, of full age and capacity to take upon him the royal authority. In my opinion the Prince of Wales possesses as clear a right to assume the reins of Government, and to exercise the sovereign power during his Majesty's incapacity, as he would have in case of a natural demise. He is not indeed himself to determine when he is entitled to exercise it—the two Houses of Parliament must pronounce on that matter. I conceive, however, that as short an interval as possible should be allowed to elapse before the Prince assumes the sovereignty. His Royal Highness wishes rather to wait the decision of Parliament than to urge his claim. But ought he to wait unnecessarily, while search is made after precedents, when it is perfectly known that none which bear upon the case are in existence? Nevertheless, I shall not oppose the motion, though it is incumbent on the House to restore without delay the third estate."

Such was the substance of Fox's memorable speech, than which the bitterest enemy of the heir-apparent could not have made any more calculated to injure him. Pitt, who instantly perceived the error committed by the Prince's adherents, availed himself of it with the rapidity of lightning. Starting up the instant that his adversary had finished, while his eye flashed defiance, he denied every allegation made relative to the Prince's right. "The doctrine

now advanced," observed he, "forms the most unanswerable reason for appointing the committee. If the claim of right now set up had a just foundation, this House would be precluded from any possibility of deliberation on the subject. But I maintain that from every precedent and every page of our history the assertion of such a right, either in the Prince of Wales or in any other individual, is little less than treason to the constitution. Under the actual circumstances, unless by decision of the two remaining branches of the Legislature, the heir-apparent possesses no more strict right to assume the Government than any other subject of the realm." "I admit indeed," continued Pitt, "that it is a claim entitled to the most serious consideration. But a new object of deliberation has now presented itself of greater importance than even the original question. I mean the question of our own rights, for according to the opinion just laid down, it is become matter of doubt whether this House possesses on the present occasion a deliberative power. Let us therefore ascertain, in the first instance, our own rights, since on our future proceedings depend the interests of a sovereign deservedly the idol of his people." Vainly Fox endeavoured, when too late, with great ability and eloquence to explain away his expressions. As vainly he urged that the two Houses could not constitute a Parliament and were only a convention. With as little success did he retort on his antagonist the charge of meaning to declare the crown elective instead of hereditary. Ineffectually did he repeat his assertion that the Prince had an undoubted claim to exercise the sovereign authority during his father's present state, and accuse the two Houses of arrogating to themselves a power contrary to the spirit of the constitution, partaking of the crime of treason.



Burke, in energetic language, but intemperate, and full of offensive personalities to Pitt, reiterated Fox's arguments, accused the Minister of becoming a competitor with the Prince of Wales for the royal authority, and launched into the most violent invectives. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was not, however, to be affected by such imputations. He knew his own force and the enemy's weakness, though he did not the less reply to the charges made against him. "At that period of our history," observed he, "when the constitution was settled on its actual foundation; when, in 1688, Mr. Somers and other distinguished statesmen declared that no person had a right to the crown independent of the consent of the two Houses, would it have been considered as either fair or decent for any member to have pronounced Mr. Somers a personal competitor of William III.?" No answer being made to this remark, and Fox, however he might exclaim against the appointment of a committee to search for precedents, not venturing to divide the House upon it, the question passed without any further impediment.

Never was any act more imprudent and ill-advised than Fox's reclamation of the Regency for the heir-apparent as his right, since it gave the Minister ground on which to stand, when he must otherwise have been driven to the last extremity. Had Fox indeed possessed a majority of votes in the assembly, he might safely have preferred any claim. But how could he or his party suppose that a Minister whose prevailing passion was love of power—master, as he found himself, of both Houses of Parliament, and generally popular throughout the country—would hasten to lay down his employments on the first summons? If, instead of preferring a claim which he had not the means to enforce, Fox had professed

the Prince's readiness to accept the Regency on any terms, under any conditions, and with any limitations or restrictions which Parliament might think proper to impose, the Minister would have been disarmed. His only efficient weapon, delay, would have been broken in his hand. The Prince must have been declared Regent before the middle of the approaching month of January, and when once installed in that high office who could say what events might have followed? Fox overturned all these speculations in a single instant.

[*11th December 1788.*] The proceedings of the peers at this eventful period of our history were not less interesting nor less important than those of the Lower House. When they met on the following day, Lord Camden, after alluding to the report of the physicians on the King's malady, which had just been read, moved for a committee "to inspect and to report such precedents as might apply to the actual condition of public affairs," thus treading in the same traces with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Then diverging to Fox's claim of right on the part of the Prince to assume the Government during his Majesty's incapacity, "If this be common law," observed Lord Camden, "or analogous to the spirit of the constitution, it is a secret to me. I neither entertained such a notion, nor have I ever met with it in any writer, nor heard it laid down by any lawyer. Opinions so new and so extraordinary are more easily promulgated than suppressed, and may involve the whole kingdom in confusion." Thus challenged and designated, Lord Loughborough came forward, and in a manly manner justified the doctrine, which he avowed to be his own. He did more, for he arraigned the assertion made in the other House by the Minister in terms of great energy. "I have heard," said Lord

Loughborough, "of a most extraordinary assertion, boldly, arrogantly, and presumptuously advanced elsewhere. It is that 'the heir-apparent to the throne, though of full age, has no more right to assume the Government while his Majesty's malady incapacitates him from reigning than any other individual subject.' If this doctrine is founded in law the Regency must be elective, not hereditary. Alarming beyond measure would be the dangers of such a principle. The two Houses of Parliament might then set up a pageant of a Regent, while they assumed themselves the sovereignty, because a Regent so elected must necessarily be the slave of his electors."—"Does not the law describe the Prince of Wales to be one and the same with the King? Is it not as much high treason to compass the death of the former as of the latter? And does that penalty attach to compassing the death of any other subject?" We must admit that these arguments were not void of weight or solidity, but in order to have sustained them a majority of peers should have thought and voted with Lord Loughborough.

It now became impossible for the Chancellor to remain any longer silent, unless he tamely sacrificed the interests of that sovereign in whose councils he held so high a place, as well as the existence of the Cabinet. Yet his position was one of uncommon difficulty, he having already commenced a treaty with the Prince of Wales, which promised a most favourable termination. I believe the first overtures were made, not by, but to Lord Thurlow, on the part of his Royal Highness, promising him to retain the Great Seal under the approaching Regency, provided that he would immediately speak and vote with the heir-apparent. In the critical situation of the King, and alienated as the Chancellor had long been from Pitt, such an offer merited mature con-

sideration. Notwithstanding Willis's assurances that his Majesty's recovery within a short period might be almost confidently expected, the great majority of his subjects inclined to believe and to fear his condition would prove hopeless. Under these impressions, the Chancellor quitting the woolsack, delivered a speech every word of which had been previously well weighed, and which still left him a free agent either to accept or to reject the Prince's propositions. Previous, he said, to making any declaration of his opinion on the delicate subject started, he wished to have the advantage of every species of information or precedent which might enlighten his judgment. Respecting Lord Loughborough's doctrine, as it applied to the heir-apparent, with whatever force and authority it might come from a magistrate so eminent, yet to himself it was new. Towards the conclusion he delicately panegyricised the Prince of Wales, by praising Lord Loughborough for not resting any part of his argument on the private virtues of that illustrious person, "who," he added, "should always have his applause when its expression would not be an act of impertinence." Having thus acquitted himself with no ordinary address, he left the debate to take its course. Lord Stormont powerfully reiterated the arguments advanced by Lord Loughborough; but the House did not the less agree, without any division, to the motion made by the President of the Council.

[12th December 1788.] Fox's assertion or reclamation of the Prince's right to take upon himself the office of Regent, repeated in terms so emphatic and positive by the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in his place as a peer—these two opinions having operated very unfavourably on the public mind, Fox, conscious of the injury that he had done

to his own cause, lost no time in endeavouring to efface the impression. As soon as the House of Commons met, Pitt gave notice that he would move "to take into consideration the present state of the nation" on the following Tuesday, the 16th of the month. Fox immediately stood up, and after complaining of the manner in which Lord Camden (whom he described, though he did not name) had misrepresented his words relative to an august personage, he began by disclaiming any authority whatever for those expressions. "I spoke merely," continued he, "as a private member of Parliament, wholly unauthorised either by his Royal Highness or by any other person." He next laboured, if not to explain away, at least to give a more limited meaning to his late demand of the Regency as the heir-apparent's right. The term "assume" Fox denied to have ever pronounced. With great ingenuity he reasoned on the nature of the Prince's title. "Many persons," added he, "admit him to possess an irresistible claim to the Regency. I agree to that idea, because I know no difference between an irresistible claim and an inherent right. But whatever doubts may exist on that point, none can arise as to the propriety of investing him with the sole administration of the Government, together with the unlimited exercise of all the regal functions, powers, and prerogatives, in the same extent as they would have been exercised by his Majesty if he had remained in health." Aware, nevertheless, that this demand might not meet with the Ministerial concurrence, Fox professed a disposition to accommodate in order to secure unanimity, deprecated the necessity of being obliged to divide the House, but admitted that if conciliation should not be found practicable, he must, however reluctantly, ascertain on which side lay the force of numbers. Lastly, he

expressed his hopes that Pitt would open the nature of the proposition which it was intended to submit to them on the subsequent Tuesday, in order that when regularly made, they might not come to it altogether unprepared for its discussion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, thus pressed to explain his ulterior intentions, did not altogether refuse compliance. Previous, however, to entering on the demanded disclosure, he informed his antagonist that there was a point at issue between them which must be decided before they proceeded one step further, namely, the assertion of the Prince of Wales's right to exercise the royal authority under the present circumstances of the country. "If that great preliminary question," continued Pitt, "should be determined on constitutional principles, I shall certainly proceed to propose measures for supplying the interruption of the King's authority. And unshaken as my opinion remains that no part of the regal power can vest in the heir-apparent as matter of right, I am equally ready to say that as matter of discretion and of expediency, it is highly desirable that whatever portion of it shall be exercised should be conferred on the Prince of Wales. I likewise think that he should exercise it with the free selection of his political servants, and that whatever authority is necessary for carrying on the public business ought to be conferred. On the other hand, all authority which is not necessary should be withheld, having ever in our view the moment when his Majesty may be capable of resuming his prerogatives." Fox, in his reply, charged the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the intention of setting up, not a regent, but a parliamentary regent, while Sheridan warned Pitt of "the danger connected with provoking the Prince of Wales to assert his claim to the Regency." These menaces made no impression

on a Minister who, conscious of possessing the confidence of Parliament, as well as that of the nation, pursued his course with a firm step.

I shall here relate an incident which its singularity entitles to notice. During the course of the debate on the 12th of December, James Macpherson, so well known by the "*Poems of Ossian*," proposed to me to take a hasty dinner at his residence in Fludyer Street, Westminster, and return immediately afterwards to the House of Commons. Ever since Pitt came into power, down to that time, he had generally supported Administration, but like many other members of Parliament he now went over to the party of the heir-apparent. During the few minutes that elapsed before dinner appeared, a superb quarto edition of Virgil lying on the table, I amused myself with trying the "*Sortes Virgilianæ*" on the great public questions which then so strongly agitated every mind. Accordingly I asked of the poet: "Will the Prince of Wales become Regent or not?" Opening the book my eye fell on these words—

——"*sic regia tecta subibat  
Horridus.*"

They occur in the seventh book of the "*Æneid*," where Aventinus, a son of Hercules, one of the auxiliaries of Turnus, enters the palace of Latinus. I thought the passage so descriptive of the indecorous haste which the heir-apparent manifested to assume the royal functions as to justify me in making a second appeal. I therefore proposed for solution to the spirit of Maro, "Will the King recover his understanding, or will he be detained in confinement during the remainder of his life?" The line on which my finger lighted occurs in the sixth book of the "*Æneid*," forming a part of Charon's surly

address to Æneas on his approaching the banks of the Styx—

“Corpora viva nefas Stygia vectare carina.”

Applying it to George III. we must translate the words, “It is criminal to shut up, as a man permanently deprived of his faculties, a prince who will resume his intellect.” Or, “It is criminal to treat as dead a man who has in him the principle of life.” Whether either of these interpretations may appear forced I won’t pretend to assert, but the fact of my having opened on the two passages above cited on the 12th of December 1788 is most accurately true. I by no means trust to memory, having been so much struck with the incident at the time that I committed it to paper instantly, and I now have before me the identical memorandum, from which I copy the words. That their application is not equally striking as it appears in the memorable instance recorded by Welwood in his *Memoirs* relative to Charles I. and Lord Falkland at Oxford, when they consulted the “*Sortes Virgilianæ*”<sup>1</sup>—(if we give implicit credit to that story)—I readily admit. Yet I think both the passages on which I stumbled may bear the interpretation here given them without violence. The truth is, Virgil’s divine poem inspires such just admiration that the gift of prediction has been bestowed on it, as if in it dwelt a prophetic and oracular spirit capable of resolving all questions.

[15th December 1788.] No sooner was the House of Peers met than Lord Fitzwilliam rose in order to deprecate any discussion on the claim of right to the Regency which had been made for the Prince of Wales. His friends recognised too late the act of imprudence committed by Fox, and repeated by

<sup>1</sup> Welwood’s *Memoirs*. Fourth Edit. London, 1702. Pp. 105-107.—WRAXALL.



Lord Loughborough. But Lord Camden replied that the rights of the two Houses of Parliament having been questioned, it had become absolutely necessary not to leave undecided points so important, previous to their adopting any measures respecting a Regency. The Duke of York coming forward at this period of the debate, endeavoured, with much earnestness and emotion, to enforce Lord Fitzwilliam's arguments. Speaking in the name of his elder brother, as well as in his own, "The Prince," observed he, "has not preferred any such claim. I am confident that he understands too well the sacred principles which placed the House of Brunswick on the throne of these kingdoms ever to assume or to exercise any power, let his claim be what it may, not derived from the public will expressed through their representatives, and through your lordships assembled in Parliament."

Such a declaration, made from so high a quarter, would unquestionably, in a case of minor importance, have sufficed to stop all further disquisition on the point. But the Prince of Wales's advisers, in their injudicious haste to get possession of power, forgot that they had to contend against a Minister who could neither be cajoled nor intimidated. The Earl of Bute, the Duke of Grafton, Lord North, and the Earl of Shelburne, all had successively, when hard pressed by national clamour, or outvoted in Parliament, hastened to give in their resignation. Pitt played an opposite game. Popular in his own person, maintaining the cause of a popular sovereign labouring under an afflicting malady, which might, however, prove only temporary, and opposing men unpopular, whose acquisition of office, if it should take place, was generally contemplated in the light of a national calamity,—his business was to protract the struggle. Possessing a supe-

riority of numbers in both Houses of Parliament, he could dispute every inch of ground and throw up new works against the assailants as fast as the old defences were carried. If the predictions of Willis were solid, three months might completely restore the King's mind. In that case the contest became merely a race against time. Even should his Majesty not recover, Pitt could return to a private station, as he had done in 1783, sustained by the regrets of a great majority among his countrymen.

It was nevertheless evident that his whole superstructure rested on the numbers which he could command and retain in the Houses of Lords and Commons, a foundation frail in itself and attacked by powerful opponents. Every successive week that the sovereign remained in his present state, without any visible symptoms of amendment, weakened the Minister's control over his adherents. He might, like Fox in 1784, find himself abandoned and ultimately left in a minority. Already various peers as well as commoners declared their intention to join the Prince's party. Many others wavered, and might desert him. Nor was the extent of his influence in either House as yet ascertained, no division having hitherto taken place since the meeting of Parliament. In this critical position any defection in his own Cabinet might open a wide breach to the enemy. But Pitt well knew that the Chancellor had closed his bargain with the heir-apparent since the House of Peers last met on the 11th of December. Every condition demanded was conceded by his Royal Highness, and Thurlow engaged that in the progress of the approaching debate he would oppose Lord Camden's proposition. Pitt, however, did not then know that the negotiation, after being thus concluded, had been suddenly and unexpectedly overturned. Lord

Loughborough having received intimation of it, instantly repaired to Carlton House, where he clamoured so loudly against the concessions, all which must be made at his expense, that the Prince, in order to appease him, reluctantly consented to send Fox to the Chancellor, with a message stating his inability to fulfil the stipulated conditions. Fox only made the notification a few hours before the discussion came on in the House of Peers, a fact of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was ignorant. The House of Commons having adjourned over that evening to Tuesday, the 16th of December, all curiosity became attracted to the Upper House, where the steps of the throne were crowded with members of Parliament anxious to hear the Duke of York—for it was well known that he intended to take a personal part in the discussion. Among them stood Pitt himself, accompanied by two or three of his intimate friends. The Minister came fully prepared for Lord Thurlow's defection, and in expectation of being an ear-witness of his first speech for Opposition.

As soon as the Duke of York sat down the Chancellor began by declaring that no individual present could feel a stronger repugnance than himself to the agitation of any question not absolutely demanded by the nature of the subject. Questions of right, he observed, were generally invidious, often unnecessary. When the report from the committee which was occupied in searching for precedents should be made, they would be enabled to judge what steps ought to be taken for restoring vigour to the executive government. "But, above all other duties, we are bound," continued he, "to preserve the rights of the King entire, so that when Divine Providence shall restore his Majesty to his people he may not find himself in a worse situation than he stood pre-

vious to his malady, or disabled from exercising all his rightful prerogatives." Adverting next to an observation made by Lord Stormont during the preceding debate, when that nobleman had said that "his emotions on contemplating the affliction under which the sovereign laboured were rendered more acute by his recollection of the marks of kindness that he had been accustomed to receive from his Majesty;" "My own sorrow," pursued the Chancellor, "is aggravated by the same circumstance. My debt of gratitude likewise to him is ample for the numerous favours which he has conferred on me, which whenever I forget may God forget me!" Pitt, who was standing at only a few paces distant from him when he pronounced these words, well knowing the treaty into which Lord Thurlow had entered with Carlton House, no longer master of his indignation, he turned round to General Manners and to the other friends close to him, and in a low voice exclaimed, "Oh, the rascal!" General Manners himself assured me of this fact, adding, "I was so astonished at it, and so unable to account for it, that when walking out with Pitt some weeks afterwards I asked him the reason of his exclamation. He related to me the particulars of the Chancellor's conduct, together with the cause that finally produced the rupture of the negotiation." It is impossible to call in doubt the truth of the testimony here produced. Manners, who is alive at the present hour (in March 1820), being a man of strict honour and veracity, my intimate friend of forty years, above all suspicion of inventing such a story, and as devoid of any enmity towards Lord Thurlow or towards his memory as I am myself.

The debate, continuing after the Chancellor had finished, became angry, personal, and tumultuous. Lord Stormont having charged the President of the

Council with bringing into discussion a subject of the most delicate nature in a disorderly and unparliamentary manner, that nobleman vindicated himself from the imputation. "I did not," observed he, "first broach this doctrine of the Prince of Wales's right to the Regency. But having been asserted it must be noticed, because we are engaged in a proceeding which will materially affect the liberties of posterity." As the Duke of York had risen to address the assembly early in the evening, so the Duke of Gloucester spoke towards its close. In language and in manner the most earnest he deprecated any further conversation on a question calculated, as he asserted, to produce the greatest calamities. The Duke of Cumberland, though wholly devoted to his nephew, yet conscious of his own inability to mix in debate, remained silent.<sup>1</sup>

Pitt, however indignant at the Chancellor's conduct, yet knew too well the value of Thurlow's talents and support under circumstances so critical not to suppress his resentment. They continued to sit in Cabinet and to act together, if not cordially yet in apparent union, throughout the whole future progress of the King's malady. But Lord Thurlow's meditated tergiversation did not remain a secret. Political prints, exposed at the time in the shops of the metropolis, represented him stripping off his coat and turning it inside out, accompanying the act with an appropriate observation that "one side would do as well as the other." Dundas, on the contrary, who well knew that for him no asylum would be found at Carlton House, and that his only hopes of office or views of ambition must centre in Pitt, never once swerved

<sup>1</sup> It was he who said to Gibbon, "I suppose you are at your old trade, scribble, scribble, scribble!"—ED.

from his friend the Minister throughout the whole protracted struggle.

[16th December 1788.] Hitherto no division had taken place in either House of Parliament, but such an appeal could not be much longer delayed, each party being anxious to ascertain their respective strength. It was, however, obvious that if some signs of convalescence did not manifest themselves in the King's malady, the Ministerial numbers would insensibly, perhaps rapidly, diminish, while the adherents of the heir-apparent would receive continual accessions. No sooner did the House of Commons meet than the Chancellor of the Exchequer opened his proposition for supplying the deficiency in the legislature. During the whole time that I was a member of that assembly I never had greater occasion to admire the prodigious powers of his calm, collected, and capacious mind than on the evening in question. Nor did Fox, though labouring under severe and obvious indisposition, display abilities less splendid. Throughout a debate of at least nine hours they and they only contended for superiority. All the other members might almost be regarded as auditors, though some of them occasionally took part in the discussion. Pitt, while he developed his intentions and proposed his resolutions for restoring the suspended functions of the royal authority, did not the less adhere to his former declaration that the question so injudiciously agitated by Fox of the Prince of Wales's right to assume the Regency must be decided before any other topic.

"I readily acknowledge," continued he, "the most eminent qualities in the present heir-apparent. But it has been asserted within these walls that he possesses at this moment a title as indisputable to exercise the sovereign authority as he would have had by the natural demise of the King, because the

present suspension is a civil death. Can we then consider his Majesty's indisposition, which is not an uncommon case, and in general only temporary, as a civil death? I am persuaded that we shall not."—"The lofty terms in which that claim of right was originally made have, I admit, been since somewhat lowered. It has likewise been declared in another assembly that no intention exists of enforcing that right, but words form no parliamentary ground of proceeding, and cannot afford a guarantee that at some future period of our history such attempts may not be resumed or asserted."

Powerful, eloquent, and admirably adapted to the occasion as was the Minister's speech, Fox's reply did not fall short of it in any of these particulars. I cannot indeed too strongly repeat that in mental endowments of every kind Fox equalled, perhaps exceeded, his antagonist. It was Pitt's superior judgment and correct life which principally turned in his favour the scale, which retained him in office throughout almost his whole career, while the want of those qualities excluded Fox from office. The former had, moreover, only one predominant passion—love of power, and the fame as well as advantages connected with it. Fox, as I have elsewhere observed, found room in his bosom for many pursuits besides ambition and thirst of glory. History and poetry each attracted, soothed, and delighted him. Pitt was always a Minister, or aspiring and meditating to become a Minister. Nature had intended him for the Cabinet and for no other situation. Fox, at his retreat on St. Anne's Hill, could derive amusement from his garden, from his library, from conversation, in a variety of domestic or of literary avocations. But Pitt, when compelled from 1801 to 1804 to reside during many months of each year in solitary grandeur with Lady Hester Stanhope at Walmer Castle, listening to the waves of

the German Ocean, while Addington, whom he had raised from comparative obscurity to the highest offices, filled his vacant seat, Pitt only supported life by the anticipation of his speedy return to power. On that object, and on that object alone, was his mind constantly fixed. During his exile from Downing Street to the Kentish shore, a period of nearly three years, he underwent all the torments of mortified ambition. I saw him frequently at that time, and his countenance always seemed to say—

“Existence may be borne, and the deep root  
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode  
In bare and desolated bosoms.”

His wishes were gratified. He resumed his office, and died within twenty months afterwards, the victim of his own accomplished desires. His star produced him under the reign of George III.; if he had flourished under George IV. he would probably have remained during the greater part of his life on the Opposition bench, while Fox would have been Minister. Throughout the whole contest he was not less indebted to Fox's errors than to his own transcendent dexterity for the triumph that he obtained. If Fox had displayed at that time as much ability in getting possession of power as Pitt exhibited in keeping possession of it, the latter never could have held out till the King's recovery.

In the course of his speech, Pitt had gone largely into precedents analogous to the actual condition of the country, drawn from the Plantagenet times, but particularly from the calamitous reign of Henry VI., when it had become necessary to elect a Regent—or rather a Protector. Fox well observed that precedents extracted from such periods of our history, or indeed from any periods antecedent to the Revolution, were altogether irrelevant and inapplicable; because at no era previous to 1688 “was civil liberty



clearly defined and understood, all the rights of the different branches of our Legislature ascertained, and the free spirit of the British constitution practically acknowledged." Then adverting to the great subject of actual dispute, "On the present occasion," observed he, "two opposite assertions have been made in this House relative to the Prince of Wales's right to exercise the sovereign authority during its actual suspension. I deprecate any decision on so delicate a point, but since the Minister seems determined to render it a personal question, and to have recourse to his majority, let the motion be, 'That we are of opinion the Prince of Wales, being of full age and capacity, has no more right to exercise the royal authority during his Majesty's incapacity than any other subject.' He knows that he dares not risk it. Notwithstanding his high character and his influence within these walls, he would not be supported by twenty members." "The claim itself," continued Fox, "has been disavowed in another assembly, by an exalted personage, in his brother's name, so that truly to describe the case, the preamble of the bill must run thus: 'Whereas the Prince of Wales has never claimed any right to the Regency, it becomes necessary for the Peers and Commons of England to declare that he has no right, and we therefore declare his Royal Highness sole Regent of these kingdoms.'"

After exhausting every argument suggested by reason or furnished by history to sustain his cause, Fox concluded with addressing to his rival the keenest personal animadversions. "He appears," said Fox, "to have been so long in the possession of power, that he cannot endure to part with it from his grasp. Finding the whole authority intrusted by the constitution to the sovereign not too much for carrying on the government with vigour, he is

determined to cripple his successors. What his motives can be for adopting such a line of conduct I am ignorant; but if in this assembly there exists an ambitious individual who designs to throw the empire into confusion, he would pursue the path traced out by the Minister." Pitt was not of a temper to support such sarcasms without reply. He retorted them on his adversary in language of equal asperity, denominating his attack "unfounded, arrogant, and presumptuous. I am charged," continued he, "with acting from a mischievous spirit of ambition, unable to support the idea of relinquishing power, and therefore disposed to envy or obstruct the credit of my successors. This House and the country will determine what have been my motives throughout the whole of the present unfortunate crisis." Fox having declared it to be the Prince's determination to call himself and his friends to power, "It has been announced to-day," observed Pitt, "that the chiefs of Opposition are to be the successors of the present Administration. I know not on what authority this declaration is made, but we are obliged to him for the warning. Their principles are already well understood, and they furnish an irresistible reason for us deliberately to consider what portion of the royal prerogatives should be intrusted to them during the present temporary incapacity of the sovereign." From the beginning down to the termination of the King's malady, Fox and Pitt always beheld it through opposite mediums, the former regarding it as incurable and permanent, the latter affecting to consider it as a mere attack of disease neither uncommon nor alarming, however afflicting, and which would almost certainly yield to medical skill.

I observed that on the night of the 16th of December these two extraordinary individuals

seemed by common consent to take the debate exclusively into their own hands. Yet among those members who actively participated in the discussion there was one whose eloquence formerly melted and animated, as his wit delighted, his hearers. I allude to Lord North, who, after having scarcely been seen within the walls of the House during the two last sessions, was now led down, blind and infirm, to express his perfect coincidence in all Fox's opinions. Seated near his former colleague, he rose at an early hour of the evening, and delivered himself with his accustomed ability, though without a ray of that humour which used to illuminate his most ordinary efforts. The time and the subject, it is true, did not favour such effusions, but as Sir Thomas More jested on the scaffold, so Lord North knew how to temper with gaiety the gravest topics. Pitt finally moved three resolutions, the first only declaring that "the King was unable to attend to public business," but the second maintaining it "to be the right and duty of the two Houses to provide the means of supplying the defect of the royal authority." The third and last resolution, which was the most important, asserted it to be "necessary that the Peers and Commons of Great Britain now assembled should determine on the means by which the royal assent might be given, in the name and on the behalf of the King, to such bills as might be passed by the two Houses." Lord North having moved that "the chairman leave the chair," a division took place at a very late hour, when only 204 members supported the motion, while it was negatived by 268. I made one of the 64 majority who voted with Administration. It formed the first trial of numerical strength between the two contending parties. Lord North's infirmities did not permit him to witness the conclusion of the debate.

[19th December 1788.] Fox being likewise incapacitated by severe indisposition from attending in his place when the House met again, as soon as Colonel Fitzpatrick stated the fact, Pitt immediately consented to an adjournment till the following day. On that evening a long and desultory discussion arose relative to the second resolution, moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir Grey Cooper, in a speech full of historical analogies or precedents applicable to the actual position of the country, laboured to prove that the Prince of Wales had, if not a right to assume the Regency, yet such unquestionable pretensions to it as could not be rejected without alleging causes which would exclude him from the crown. Martin, a man whose recognised rectitude and independence of character gave weight to his observations even when they were trite, coarse, or offensive, did not hesitate to compare the notification made by Fox of the Prince's intention to call new individuals to his Councils, with Falstaff's anticipation of the offices which he and his associates hoped to fill under Henry V. after he should ascend the throne. Pitt's high character and correct deportment protected him from similar attacks. Fox disdained to notice Martin's allusion, but Windham repelled it equally with the weapons of ridicule and of reason. Powis and Marsham both came forward, as did Dempster, with propositions or motions calculated to prevent the two contending heads of parties from proceeding to extremities. Their efforts at producing conciliation proved wholly ineffectual, and the House at length adjourned, after voting the second resolution without a division.

It was against the third and last of these three resolutions that the adherents of the heir-apparent levelled the accumulated strength of their faculties, well knowing it to be the citadel of the Minister,

within which he meditated to capitulate on terms. They wished to force him to surrender without previously making conditions. In order to effect it they moved "to address the Prince to take on him the Administration during his Majesty's indisposition." By such a mode of proceeding, analogous to the conduct of the two Houses towards the Prince of Orange in 1689, they truly observed that "there would be a third estate, and the royal power would devolve on or become vested in the individual who, from every motive, must be most deeply concerned in the preservation of the monarchy." These were Fox's own expressions. When that preliminary step was taken, then, and not till then, as they maintained, was the proper moment arrived in which the two Houses should present to the newly-elected Regent the conditions or limitations on which his authority was confided to him. Of his acquiescence in those restrictions there could not arise, they said, the slightest doubt.

Unquestionably such would have been the most natural, simple, obvious, constitutional line of parliamentary conduct. But it did not suit the views of the Minister, nor perhaps would it be, he wisely thought, the safest measure for securing the King's resumption of his power whenever he might recover the use of his faculties. Pitt preferred to treat with the Prince of Wales previous and not subsequent to his being declared Regent. "Who," observed Pitt, "can answer for his not using the royal negative when the limitations are presented to him for assent?" It was therefore determined in the Cabinet to create or erect a third estate by empowering the Chancellor to put the Great Seal to such bills as the two Houses should pass, thus giving to them the form and force of law. Pitt, no doubt, would have wished that a man more accom-

modating than Lord Thurlow, as well as one on whose adherence he could more securely rely, had held the Great Seal, but the Chancellor's talents rendered him necessary, and the Minister might say with the Duke of Venice—

“Men do their broken weapons rather use  
Than their bare hands.”

[*22d December 1788.*] As soon as the House of Commons met, Burke attacked the Ministerial proposition with that impetuous, classic, splendid eloquence which frequently disdained the restraints of moderation, of reason, and almost of decorum. “As little acquainted with the interior of Carlton House as of Buckingham House, I profess,” said he, “only to deliver my sentiments in a manner becoming a simple citizen. The Great Seal, it appears, is to be affixed to a commission robbing the executive power of its due function. A composition of wax and copper is to represent the sovereign. So preposterous a fiction merits only contempt and ridicule. I disclaim all allegiance, I renounce all obedience to a King so formed. I worship the gods of our glorious Constitution, but I will not bow down before Priapus!” Against the Chancellor Burke inveighed in the most personal terms. “I approve not,” exclaimed he, “of robbery, house-breaking, or any other felony. Yet is each of these crimes less inexcusable than law forgery? If the unfortunate monarch whom we all lament could know the proposition now agitated, he would no doubt cry out with Macbeth—

‘Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,  
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,  
No son of mine succeeding.’

‘Restore me,’ he would add, ‘to my former state.

Let me not behold a black-browed phantom seated on my throne!"<sup>1</sup> Scott, the Solicitor-General, opposed to these shafts of oratorical declamation the arms of legal metaphysics, endeavouring, not without success, to demonstrate that the fiction of which Burke complained, and which he so loudly reprobated, was dictated and justified by necessity. Fox, who well knew how to appreciate talents, and who respected Scott's abilities, which were of another order from those of Arden and of Macdonald, replied to him, putting out all the energies of his mind against an adversary so worthy of his exertions. With prodigious force of language he placed in the strongest point of view the absurdity of making the two Houses legislate, which act they were incapable of performing without the King.

"It is, however, asserted," continued Fox, "in order to justify this monstrous act of usurpation, that though the King is incapable yet the throne is full. Admitting such a solecism, what is the substitute which it is proposed to adopt? To appoint a person who is to give the royal assent to bills passed by the two Houses. How is he to ascertain that assent? Is he to repair to Kew for the purpose? Human reason revolts at the supposition. Can he exercise his own discretion? No. To whom then can he apply? To the two Houses of Parliament who created him. And thus shall we have a monster unknown in English history."

Pitt answered these objections with corresponding ingenuity, if not with solidity. In reply to his adversary's denial that the two Houses could in any case legislate without the co-operation and consent of the crown he adduced the Revolution of 1688 itself. "The two remaining branches of the Legislature," observed he, "did what amounted to a legislative

<sup>1</sup> Lord Thurlow —ED.

act in that crisis of the country. They resolved to settle the crown, not on the Prince of Orange, nor on the Princess, his consort, but on both jointly, the royal authority to be exercised only by him. Here it is evident that whatever the necessity of the case required, the Lords and Commons then did. So will they do now."

In answer to Burke's and Fox's reproaches respecting the fiction of empowering the Great Seal to give the royal assent to bills, "It is this fiction," said Pitt, "which has been so much traduced and ridiculed, that governs our judicial proceedings in all the courts of law, and protects our dearest rights as well as property. It is the principle which assumes the political capacity of the King to be always entire. Certain legal forms are evidence of his will. Such is the act of affixing the Great Seal. The highest authority in the nation is the great council of the nation, and if they think proper to signify the will of the sovereign, there is no legal fiction." Pitt concluded by applying these principles and facts to the actual state of the country, particularly as to the point of binding the Prince of Wales under certain conditions before the Regency should be offered him. "When powers are once conferred," observed he, "who can say how they may be exercised? The Regent may fill the other House with new Peers, while we are actually deliberating whether that power shall, or shall not, be limited. The powers ought to be discussed while we possess the faculty of deliberation." How far the Minister veiled his own ambition under the mantle of loyalty and of zeal for the Constitution, in adopting these maxims of conduct, may excite doubt; but we must admit their consummate prudence and policy, in whatever principle they originated. At the close of the debate Pitt was



supported by a still larger majority than on the former discussion. Four hundred and twenty-nine members voted, of whom 251 followed him, while only 178 accompanied Fox into the lobby.

[26th December 1788.] After two such triumphant divisions within the space of a few days, it still remained to ascertain whether Ministers would meet with a similar degree of support in the other House, where it was well known that they would be opposed by three princes of the blood. That assembly, proceeding with more deliberate steps than the Commons, did not come to the discussion of the Regency till towards the last days of December. Lord Rawdon<sup>1</sup> having moved "to address the Prince of Wales to take on him the executive government as sole Regent," Earl Camden replied that however deeply he regretted the agitation of the question of right, nevertheless, as the doctrine had been once asserted, men's minds must be set at rest respecting the point. But the most interesting circumstance of that evening's debate was the personal attendance of the Marquis of Lansdowne. Since his resignation in 1783 he rarely quitted his palace in Berkeley Square or his retreat at Bow Wood to attend his duty as a Peer, and when he rose to speak few persons knew into which scale he intended to throw his weight. With Pitt he maintained no political connection, nor could he indeed contemplate that Minister as other than an intruder, who, availing himself of favourable circumstances, had vaulted into his vacant office. The marquisate which had been subsequently conferred on him, might gratify his pride or console his vanity, but could make no compensation to his mortified am-

<sup>1</sup> Francis Rawdon, son of the Earl of Moira, created Baron Rawdon in 1783; in 1789 he succeeded to the title of his uncle the Earl of Huntingdon, and in 1793 to that of Moira. He was subsequently Governor-General of India, and created Marquis of Hastings.—ED.

bition. Yet, on the other hand, if Pitt was a rival, Fox was an enemy. He, as well as Sheridan and Burke, had levelled the most severe reflections on Lord Shelburne's private and public character while at the head of the Treasury. The spirit of party might nevertheless supersede all recollection of these injuries, and the moment was propitious for sacrificing ancient enmities to objects of personal interest or of national consideration.

In truth the Marquis of Lansdowne was not less eminently qualified for the Minister of a great country than were either Pitt or Fox. Under many points of view he was superior to the former, in some he excelled the latter. Far more affable, easy of access, and pleasing in his manners than Pitt, he surpassed even Fox in accurate knowledge of the European courts and their policy or interests. In application to business, facility of comprehension, and aptitude for affairs, he yielded to neither. George III. considered him with much partiality, while he entertained no such personal attachment towards Pitt as he had felt for Lord Bute and for Lord North, and he nourished a dislike allied to aversion for Fox. Thus gifted by nature, ambitious, eloquent, highly informed, how happened it, we may naturally ask, that he only held his power for eight months, and never could regain it? The answer is obvious. Lord Lansdowne laboured under various disqualifications, of which not the least heavy was the peerage. All our most eminent Ministers since the reign of Queen Anne were members of the Lower House. Walpole, Pelham, North, the first and second Mr. Pitt, remained Commoners during the whole time that they presided in or directed the councils of the crown. If the present Earl of Chatham had died between 1784 and 1801, his decease, by transferring his

brother from the Treasury bench to a seat among peers and bishops, would have half extinguished him, notwithstanding all his talents. Pitt required the tumult, and the effervescence, and the animation of a popular assembly to sustain his eloquence. They required his presence to confirm their adherence and to justify their votes. Nor would Fox have suffered a less deep political eclipse during the same period of time if death had carried off his nephew Lord Holland. At the present hour, in 1820, though Lord Liverpool occupies the head of the Treasury, Lord Castlereagh manages the Lower House, and may be regarded as the efficient Minister. Fox performed the same part in 1782 under the Marquis of Rockingham, in 1783 under the Duke of Portland, and even in 1806 under Lord Grenville. Such is the spirit and genius of the British Constitution, which is essentially democratic, though tempered by monarchical and aristocratic institutions.

Lord Lansdowne's second defect proceeded from the want of that quality denominated in pugilistic language bottom—in other words, firmness. If he had possessed it in 1783, as Pitt exhibited it in 1784, he might have maintained himself in office, notwithstanding the vote of censure carried by a small majority in the Lower House against the recently concluded peace. Even Lord North displayed far more firmness than the Earl of Shelburne. During the three last years of his Administration, from 1779 to 1782, he was many times left in a minority on questions of vital importance. Yet he did not resign, and he was ultimately swallowed up in the overwhelming calamities of the American war. Addington wanted almost every constituent quality of a great, an accomplished, or an able statesman. He was extinguished in May 1804,

or rather, he disappeared in an instant, without any adequate apparent cause, except Pitt's impatience to reoccupy his former situation. It may indeed justly excite wonder that Addington should have remained above three years First Minister of this country, during at least one half of which period we were contending for our existence against Napoleon. In no endowment of mind did he excel. His eloquence was cold and spiritless, while of Continental affairs he was supremely ignorant. Even in finance he exhibited no resources. The last and greatest defect in Lord Lansdowne's intellectual composition was his reputed insincerity—a vice which, more than any other, brought Charles I. to the block.

The sentiments expressed by the Marquis on that evening would have done honour to any Minister of any age. "I wish, my Lords," said he, "that the members of Administration had come down at once with such a commission as the third resolution points out, and that, instead of now discussing the propriety of putting to it the Great Seal, it had been acted upon in the first instance. What impediment prevents the officers of the crown from issuing such a commission? They ought not to be deterred by hard words, denominating the Act a fiction."—"The principles laid down at the Revolution make the crown to be, not descendible property, like a pigstye or a laystall, but a descendible trust, for millions and ages yet unborn. I contend, therefore, that the hereditary succession cannot be considered as a right. It is a mere political expedient, capable of being altered by the two Houses. In cases of exigence, they have always been termed the Legislature, in order to prevent the greatest of all possible evils, a disputed succession. This reasoning obviously applies with augmented force to the case of a Regent." Could Lord Somers, or Algernon Sydney

himself, devoted as he was to a Republic, have more admirably defined our Constitution ?

There were other passages in Lord Lansdowne's speech of great beauty and sublimity. "The people, my Lords," said the Marquis, "have rights. Kings and princes have none. The people want neither charters nor precedents to prove their rights; for they are born with every man in every country, and exist in all countries alike, though in some they may have been lost. I wish, therefore, that the question of right to exercise the royal authority, which has been claimed and asserted, may be decided, in order that those who suffer oppression under governments the most despotic may be taught their rights as men. They will then learn that though their rights are not, like ours, secured by precedents and charters, yet as soon as they assert their rights, they must be acknowledged." Neither Hampden nor Locke could have reclaimed for their countrymen and for mankind the blessing of civil liberty, as their birthright, in language of greater energy than do these expressions of Lord Lansdowne. His mention of the Prince of Wales, and the encomiums that accompanied it, were, however, regarded as susceptible of a more doubtful interpretation. "Let us suppose," continued the Marquis, "that the present heir-apparent, instead of residing at Windsor, and exhibiting a model of affection towards the sovereign, instead of doing the honours of the country to foreigners, and raising the national character for polished manners, had been caballing away his time in the capital. Let us suppose that he had been intriguing with the army and the navy, cultivating his interests with foreign courts, or raising money to carry on his ambitious projects, thus attempting to enforce his claim and to maintain his right by undue means. Would not every man in the kingdom wish, if such had been the conduct

of the Prince, that the two Houses of Parliament should interpose to exclude him from exercising the powers of Regent, and appoint another to fill that office?"

The Chancellor strongly supported Lord Lansdowne's arguments, while he bestowed eulogiums on the Prince, which were thought to be more sincere than those of the Marquis. In reply to Lord Loughborough's assertions of the right which his Royal Highness possessed to exercise the Regency, Thurlow demanded, "What means the term of Regent? Where is it defined? In what law book, or in what statute? I have heard of protectors, guardians, and lords justices; but I know not where to look for the office and functions of a Regent. To what end then address the Prince to take on him a power the limits of which are not ascertained?" "No man entertains a higher respect than myself," continued he, "for that illustrious person. I wish as ardently the advancement of his honour and interests as those who affect more attachment to him. But I never will argue that he possesses any inherent right to the Regency, or that, as heir-apparent, he can possess such a right. There might even arise Princes of Wales whose conduct would justify the two Houses in setting them aside from the Regency. It becomes, therefore, expedient that we should not abandon the power inherent in us, nor under the circumstances in which we are placed, fail to declare it to be our right."

If the Prince of Wales did not escape some reflections on the claim set up to the Regency, Fox was treated with still more severity. The Earl of Abingdon, a nobleman of eccentric character, unguarded, and who like myself was once committed to the King's Bench prison for an act of imprudence, pointed out the inconsistency of Fox's conduct

in alternately maintaining contradictory opinions. "These, my Lords," exclaimed he, alluding to the asserted right of the Prince to assume the government, "are the doctrines of the same man who, only a few years ago, meditated to pluck the crown from the King's head. He calls himself a Whig, and while he is in the act of erecting a monumental column to commemorate the glorious Revolution, he is tearing up the very ground on which reposes that Revolution."—"I assert that the right to model anew, or if necessary to alter the succession, vests solely and exclusively in Parliament. This, my Lords, is Revolution doctrine; this is my doctrine, though I am not a member of the Whig Club, nor have I subscribed to the intended politico-patriotic obelisk which is to be raised in Runnymede."

At a very late hour, when the division took place, only sixty-six peers supported Lord Rawdon's motion, while ninety-nine negatived the proposition. The Dukes of York and Cumberland voted in the minority, as the Duke of Gloucester would have likewise done, if he had not been prevented from attending by severe indisposition. All the Lords of the Bedchamber, with the single exception of the Duke of Queensberry, adhered to Government. Thirteen bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, were likewise found on that side, three members of the Episcopal bench voting with Opposition. The Scottish Peers ranged themselves, six with Administration, seven on the other side. Among the latter noblemen, the Marquis of Lothian attracted severe animadversion by joining the Prince's party.<sup>1</sup> He commanded the first regiment of Life Guards, was constantly near the King's person, and peculiarly acceptable to him, though, like Colonel

<sup>1</sup> "I could have better spared a better man," said the King, when he was told of this defection.—ED.

Fitzpatrick, he was more fitted for that court of which Dryden says,

“Whitehall the naked Venus first revealed ;  
There standing, as at Cyprus in her shrine,  
The strumpet was adored with rights divine,”

than for the correct drawing-room of George III.

The Duke of Queensberry's desertion produced if possible a stronger sensation than even Lord Lothian's, the Duke having been a Lord of the Bedchamber ever since the King's accession, during eight-and-twenty years. Two motives led him to vote with Opposition on that night—his great personal intimacy with and devotion to the heir-apparent, joined to his conviction that the sovereign had irrecoverably lost his mind. The Prince and his brother Frederick passed much of their time with the Duke at his residence in Piccadilly, principally at table, where plentiful draughts of champagne went round to the success of the approaching Regency. Dr. Warren confirmed the Duke's wavering faith in the hopeless condition of the King. Not many weeks subsequent to his Majesty's seizure, before the close of November, the Duke, desirous of forming his opinion if possible on solid grounds, drove to Windsor. His inquiries were solely directed to ascertain the probability of the King's recovery. The person to whom he particularly applied, an intimate friend of mine, gave him such strong reasons for believing it neither improbable nor remote, that he would have acquiesced in them. But Warren entering the apartment, and being informed of the object of the Duke's visit, led him to a window, where they held a long conversation in a subdued tone of voice. The result was that the Duke, fully persuaded of the desperate nature of the malady, determined to join and to vote with the Prince.



[*27th—31st December 1788.*] The year now drew to its termination. Pitt, sustained by large majorities on two divisions in the House of Commons, and on one division in the House of Peers, already prepared to lay before the Prince of Wales the conditions on which the King's confidential servants intended to propose to Parliament that he should be invited and empowered to exercise the royal authority during his Majesty's illness. No apparent amelioration had as yet taken place in the disorder with which he was afflicted ; but Willis's long experience and attentive observation enabled him confidently to hold out expectations to the Queen and the Ministers, that a complete restoration of his mind would issue at no remote period. Warren as positively maintained the contrary opinion. The former physician obtained most credence at St. James's and at Kew ; the latter at Carlton and at Devonshire Houses. If the first was believed by the club at White's, the second was trusted at Brookes's. The House of Commons attempted to meet on the 29th of the month, and Cornwall, the Speaker, though much indisposed, attended, but the number of members necessary for placing him in the Chair not having arrived at four, no business could be transacted. On the subsequent day illness incapacitated the Speaker from appearing, and he never again entered within those walls. His death took place early in 1789, an event which added to the embarrassments of Parliament and of the nation. The season was rendered more melancholy by the severity of the weather, which during successive weeks buried the capital in snow. Under these gloomy physical and political circumstances terminated the year 1788.

[*1st January 1789.*] The first event which arrested attention at the commencement of the new year was the death of Lord Grantley. He had

occupied a conspicuous place under the reign of George III., and was considerably advanced beyond seventy at the time of his decease. After passing successively through the posts of Solicitor and of Attorney-General, Sir Fletcher Norton was placed in the Speaker's chair of the House of Commons, by Lord North, early in 1770, on the demise of Sir John Cust; whose portrait, as drawn by Wilkes, conveys the meanest idea of his ability to fill the office. By the same Minister Norton was displaced in 1780; and I formed one of the majority on the occasion. Yet though thus deprived, after ten years' service, of an employment which usually or invariably conducts among us to the peerage, he had the good fortune to enter the Upper House within eighteen months subsequent to his exclusion from the Chair: a circumstance for which he was however more indebted to Lord Shelburne than to the Marquis of Rockingham. The last-mentioned nobleman, who only survived about twelve weeks Sir Fletcher's elevation, would never have compelled the King to confer on him that dignity, if his Majesty, at the Earl of Shelburne's solicitation, had not created Dunning<sup>1</sup> a peer. Lord Grantley was a bold, able, and eloquent, but not a popular pleader. *Junius* treats him with great severity. "This," says he, "is the very lawyer described by Ben Jonson," who

"Gives forked council; takes provoking gold  
On either hand, and puts it up.  
So wise, so grave, of so perplexed a tongue,  
And loud withal, that would not wag, nor scarce  
Lie still, without a fee."

Acting constantly with Opposition, he would have formed one of the minority in the House of Peers on the division of the 26th of December if he had not been prevented by illness. Cornwall, his suc-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Ashburton.—ED.

cessor in the Speaker's chair, followed him on the ensuing day, only surviving him about twenty-four hours; thus presenting to the metropolis the singular spectacle of two successive Speakers of the House of Commons dying on two successive days. Under George I., in 1720, London had witnessed two Secretaries of State, Lord Stanhope and Mr. Craggs, lying dead at the same time. As Lord Grantley held the office of Chief Justice in Eyre south of Trent, so Cornwall was possessed of the same office north of Trent. Both these lucrative sinecures were bestowed by Pitt some months afterwards; the former on his brother's father-in-law, Lord Sydney; while with the other he gratified his friend John Charles Villiers.<sup>1</sup>

[*2d—5th January 1789.*] Never was any man in public situation less regretted or sooner forgotten than Cornwall! His death being notified on the same day by Hatsell,<sup>2</sup> the first clerk, to a large assemblage of members who crowded down to the House as soon as the intelligence of the Speaker's decease was announced; Rose, acting as Minister in Pitt's absence, moved and carried an immediate adjournment. On the ensuing Monday, being the 5th of the month, the Earl of Euston, Pitt's colleague for the University of Cambridge, proposed Mr. William Wyndham Grenville to supply the vacant chair. Pulteney seconded the motion, observing, after the customary encomiums on Mr. Grenville, that "he possessed a hereditary claim to the favour of the House as the guardian of their privileges, which he had contributed to fortify by his judicious alteration of his father's bill"—the Grenville Act for trying contested elections. On

<sup>1</sup> Son of the first Earl of Clarendon, of the Villiers family.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> John Hatsell, author of "Precedents of Proceedings in the House of Commons;" died 15th October 1820.—ED.

the other side, Sir Gilbert Elliot was started against the Ministerial candidate. Neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor Fox took any part in the debate, which was short, and conducted on both sides with great moderation; but I believe not a word of regret, or even of approbation, was expressed for the character and services of the deceased Speaker from any part of the House. In truth he little deserved such recognitions of his official merit. The division formed a test of the respective strength of the two parties. Grenville carried it by a majority of seventy-one, only 359 members voting, so that near two hundred were absent. The new Speaker was probably the youngest man who had attained, since the reign of Edward III., to so honourable an eminence, having scarcely accomplished his twenty-ninth year. This proof of Ministerial influence being exhibited, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that on the following day he should open to the House the restrictions which he intended to propose as necessary to be annexed to the office of Regent.

I have already stated that Pitt, having established, by the votes of both Houses, the principle of the right inherent in them to confer the Regency, in contradiction to Fox's and Lord Loughborough's assertion of the Prince of Wales's right to assume the Regency, was now about to address his Royal Highness on the subject. He fulfilled that intention a very short time before the close of the year 1788. His letter was brief, if we consider the important nature of its contents, but free from all ambiguity, and respectful, without any mixture of unbecoming submission. It enumerated the leading restraints proposed to be laid on the future Regent—restraints unquestionably severe, if they had been calculated for duration; but Pitt expressly added that "they

were formed on the supposition that his Majesty's illness would be only temporary." The Prince, if he had chosen to adopt for his guidance the same assumption, and if, acting in conformity to it, he would only have allowed the existing Government to remain untouched till it could be ascertained whether Warren or Willis was best founded in his conjectures, might have avoided all collision with the Administration. Three or four months would have sufficed to make the experiment. A patriot heir-apparent would have so acted. Patriot advisers would have so counselled him. Or if those words have no prototypes—if patriot kings and ministers never existed except in the writings of Lord Bolingbroke—yet wise, decorous, judicious counsellors would not have consented to take office till the lapse of a few weeks had enabled them to form some solid opinion respecting the continuance or the cessation of the King's malady. The gratitude and the approbation of the country would have repaid them for their delay in taking possession of power. Nay more, as soon as Parliament and the nation had been convinced that no reasonable prospect presented itself of the full restoration of the royal faculties, they would have forced Ministers to confer the prerogatives of the sovereign on his representative, without limitations. It was the belief, or at least it was the hope and wish generally cherished of the King's speedy recovery, that justified the Chancellor of the Exchequer in laying down restrictions, and enabled him to carry them in Parliament.

The Prince's answer to Pitt's letter was long when compared with that of the Minister. Concealed resentment, or rather half-suppressed indignation, pervaded every line. Its composition was attributed to Fox, approved by Lord Loughborough, and if considered merely as a production of the pen,

might merit praise. But instead of accepting cheerfully the limited powers offered by Ministers, and acquiescing in their supposition that a few weeks or months would replace his father in the exercise of his functions, the Prince saw only "the weakness, disorder, and insecurity that would pervade every branch of the Administration." He beheld the sovereign consigned to a perpetual strait waistcoat, while Pitt confidently anticipated his resumption of the sceptre. He complained that "a plan should be offered to his consideration, by which Government must be rendered difficult, if not impracticable, in his hands." He stigmatised it as "a project for dividing the royal family from each other." He denominated it "a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward, and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity."

Yet after thus strongly censuring, and almost criminating the fabricators of such a proposition, he finally consented to accept "the painful trust imposed on him," from considerations of a public nature. His letter was dated from Carlton House on the 2d of January. It may perhaps excite surprise that Fox should not himself have advised the Prince to retain Pitt and the other Ministers in office for two or three months, rather than seize on a Government thus curtailed, the tenure of which was so precarious. But ambition, sharpened and impelled by poverty, could not listen to reason. Fox was already forty, Burke verged towards sixty. Neither the one nor the other possessed the means of comfortable, independent subsistence. If once installed in office, they trusted to events and to their own ability for prolonging the duration of their

power. Nor is it possible to assert that, putting public opinion out of the question, they reasoned on fallacious grounds. If the Prince had been declared Regent, and proceeded to exercise his authority, who can pretend to say what events might have taken place? It opens a wide field of speculation, on which I do not think proper to enter for many reasons.

[*6th January 1789.*] Meanwhile the state of the King became a subject of the most anxious contemplation. He had already remained during a period of nearly ten weeks wholly deprived of reason, subjected at times to the most coercive treatment which it is necessary to use towards individuals in his calamitous situation. Many persons, even among those who most ardently desired his recovery, yet began to consider it as very doubtful. Every additional day seemed to diminish its probability, and the operation of that fact on the members of both Houses who had hitherto supported Administration, might be most injuriously felt, unless some favourable symptoms speedily manifested themselves. Willis, who displayed great professional skill in his treatment of the royal patient, invariably and confidently predicted the complete restoration of his intellect. But these assurances made little impression on the public mind. In every demand compatible with propriety, Willis indulged him. During one of his tranquil intervals, about this time, the King desired that a volume of Shakespeare's plays might be brought to him. Willis ordered it to be put into his hands, without previously adverting to the contents. It contained, among other tragedies, "*King Lear*." His insanity, too, like that of Lear, exhibited all the characteristics of royal lunacy. He still felt and expressed himself as a sovereign, retaining a perfect consciousness of who he was, even amidst his priva-

tion of all intelligence. On or about the last day of December 1788, some circumstances occurred in his malady, which though unobserved by the other medical attendants, or not considered as forming grounds of hope, yet emboldened Willis to communicate them to the Chancellor, with the gratifying assurance that he regarded them in a most favourable point of view. He added at the same time, that he did not expect the recovery to be near at hand. The information thus given, Lord Thurlow mentioned on the following day when addressing the Duke of Norfolk in the House of Peers, without however expressly naming Dr. Willis as his authority. Nevertheless, such an allusion coming from so high a quarter, did not fail to produce a corresponding sensation throughout the metropolis, and operated as a support to Ministers.

In order to counteract that impression, the leaders of Opposition determined if possible to set on foot a new examination of the physicians, hoping that the result would tend to invalidate, if not wholly to overturn, Willis's prognostics. But as a motion for the purpose would come with more effect from a country gentleman of independent character and fortune than from Fox or Sheridan, Mr. Loveden<sup>1</sup> undertook to bring it before the House. I knew him well, and I believe he is still alive at the present time in March 1820, though far advanced in life. He represented the borough of Abingdon in the county of Berks, near which place he possessed a fine landed property. His figure, manners, and address all bespoke a substantial yeoman rather than a person of education and condition; but he did not want plain common sense, nor language in which to clothe his ideas. He, such as I have described him, starting up unexpectedly as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was

<sup>1</sup> Edward Loveden Loveden.—ED.



preparing to open, in a most crowded House, the nature of the restrictions intended to be annexed to the Regency, drew attention from the singularity of his interposition at such a moment, for I believe he had never or scarcely ever before risen to speak in that assembly. Commencing by a declaration that he was

*"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,"*

though he had voted with the minority on one, and I believe on both the divisions of the 16th and of the 22d of December ; he proceeded to observe that before the terms on which the Regency should be conferred became matter of discussion, it imported to know accurately the present state of his Majesty's health. A month having elapsed since the last report of the physicians, the House ought to be informed whether subsequently the probability of a recovery had increased or diminished, as rumours of a contradictory nature were circulated. Limitations of the Regent's power might, he added, be proper to a certain extent if the suspension of the royal authority should prove merely temporary ; but such a proposition would be very differently received if little expectation existed of his Majesty's restoration to reason. Finally, he moved to re-examine the physicians for the purpose of ascertaining whether "the present symptoms afforded ground to hope for the King's speedy recovery."

Pitt, thus taken by surprise, exhibited, as he always did when pressed on any occasion of magnitude or difficulty, that calm, collected, prompt, sound judgment which distinguished him from Fox throughout his political life. He opposed Loveden's motion as unnecessary, all the physicians concurring in the probability of the King's recovery, and expressed his great anxiety to restore the Government with as

little delay as possible to a state of energy and effect. Fox, while he concurred with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the concluding sentiment, nevertheless urged the propriety of re-examining the physicians, because four weeks had elapsed without any alteration whatever in his Majesty's health. The declaration made by Lord Thurlow in the other House he censured in strong terms as unsubstantiated by evidence or facts, and therefore as only calculated, by holding out fallacious hopes, to gain votes. Burke did not limit himself to these remarks, but gave the reins to his irritable temper. Having congratulated the House on the Minister's declaration that he wished to restore energy and effect to the Government, Burke observed that "those expressions ought to be realised ; not to set up a maimed, crippled, and impotent mockery of Government." Then diverging to the state of the Sovereign's malady, he proceeded to read from the examination of one of the physicians who had been examined before the committee of the House of Peers, some answers which were unfavourable to the expectation of his Majesty's recovery. Perceiving that the citations thus made excited marks of disapprobation from the Ministerial benches, he burst into one of those transports of classic rage in which he frequently indulged. "It is," exclaimed he, "the duty of those who sit opposite to pay due attention to the opinions delivered respecting the King's state before they cut and carve the Government as they would a carrion carcase for hounds, instead of immolating it as a sacrifice to the gods."

George Vansittart, member for the county of Berks (whose seat of Bisham Abbey lay in the vicinity of Windsor, who had always received distinguishing marks of royal regard, and whose sister had performed no ordinary part in the household of the late Princess Dowager of Wales)—this gentleman asking

across the floor to be informed of the physician's name whose opinion Burke had read, he answered that it was the examination of Dr. Warren. A loud cry arising among the friends of Administration at the mention of a person regarded as so partial to the heir-apparent, Burke renewed a second time his exclamations. "Were their projects so soon ripe," he demanded, "that they ventured already to disclose their sentiments; meaning to construct a miserable machine of mutilated government on a foundation of falsehood, of fraud, and of calumny? Were they about to rob the first physician in England of his character?" Lord North, who was present and seated near Burke, mindful of his former obligations to Warren, rose likewise in order to do justice to his moral qualities and integrity no less than to his medical skill, which he did in terms of high encomium. On the other hand, Pitt proved from Warren's own admission while on his examination, that however recognised might be his professional ability, yet, in the particular disorder under which his Majesty suffered, his skill was comparatively little, as he owned that he always thought it necessary to call in others to supply his own want of experience in that line of practice. Adverting next to Burke's violence, Pitt expressed his concern at the injury which such warmth must produce to Burke himself, "as it seemed to arise from his entertaining wishes unlike those felt by the rest of the House." Finally, he admitted that after the assertions which had been made, and the inferences which had been drawn in the progress of the evening's debate, he found himself reduced to agree to a further inquiry. He hoped, however, that it might be terminated in a day or two, and he should therefore make no opposition to the appointment of a select committee for the purpose.

Burke now starting up a third time attacked Pitt in the most personal manner. "I am necessitated," cried he, "to repel a malignant and unmerited imputation. When I fly from inquiry, then let the Minister aim at me his envenomed shafts." "If a difference of opinion exists among his Majesty's medical attendants, why is not Dr. Munro called to give his advice? The keeper of one madhouse ought to be set against the keeper of another, and by their collision we shall arrive at the truth. Let the keeper of a madhouse with only thirty patients be opposed to one who has three hundred under his care! Thus will the House attain complete intelligence." Fox expressed himself with equal animation, but with more self-command. While he let loose his indignation at the motive attributed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Burke, Fox did not the less clothe his emotions in measured language. Relative to the King he declared that he had not the least doubt of the hopelessness of the case. Such was then indeed, I believe, the general opinion. The debate being terminated, Pitt moved for the appointment of a Committee "to examine anew the physicians." But Sheridan, not satisfied with those words, attempting to substitute others of a more comprehensive import, giving powers to the Committee "to send for persons and papers, as well as to inquire into the probability of the King's speedy recovery," a division took place. Administration, on this trial of strength, fully sustained and even exceeded its former numbers, carrying the question by a majority of eighty, in a very full House, where 462 members voted.

[7th—13th January 1789.] In consequence of Pitt's compliance with the object of Loveden's motion, the deliberations and proceedings of both Houses of Parliament became suspended during ten

days. The Prince's adherents, in thus supporting a new inquiry respecting the King's state, hoped to prove two points,—first, the augmenting improbability of his complete recovery, and next, that the probability of such an event became diminished from day to day by the duration of his malady. If a general impression of these facts could once be established, they well knew that Pitt's majority would be sapped at its foundation. That majority, it appeared from the results of three successive divisions in the House of Commons on the late questions, might be calculated at from sixty to seventy, above the former but below the latter number. Consequently, thirty-five members passing over from the Ministerial side to the other party would give his Royal Highness the command of the Assembly. In the Upper House the Administration had indeed been supported on the only division which had as yet taken place there by ninety-nine peers, while their opponents could only reckon sixty-six. But Pitt's superiority of numbers, on which he could rely, might be estimated under thirty. Fifteen votes, therefore, withdrawn from Government and added to the Opposition might turn the scale. The Lords of the Bedchamber alone, eleven of whom had supported Ministers on the 26th of December, if joined by three or four bishops, would suffice to overturn all Pitt's machinery. But on the other hand, Fox and Lord Loughborough never seemed to recollect that the operation of time might save as well as destroy the Minister. By preferring the claim of the heir-apparent to assume the Regency they had already lost almost a month. They now set on foot a new examination of the physicians instead of propelling the election of a Regent. Pitt was thus saved by his opponents.

Let us suppose that they had adopted opposite

principles, had avoided every possible subject of contest or delay, simply accepting the Regency as the donation of the two Houses, and however they might condemn or lament the restrictions imposed on the Prince, yet had advised him cheerfully to submit to them, making Ministers responsible for any inefficiency of the new Government. If Fox had so acted he would have speedily placed the heir-apparent in the Regent's chair invested with the insignia of Royal power. A new Administration would have been formed on the basis of the coalition of 1783, with some variations, Lord Stormont succeeding Lord North as Secretary for the Home Department, and the Great Seal being virtually entrusted to Wedderburn as First Commissioner. The newly-installed Regent would have opened the Session with the accustomed forms, Lord Loughborough occupying the woolsack. In the other House Fox and Burke would have addressed an audience always favourably disposed towards the individuals speaking from the Treasury bench; while Pitt and Dundas, removed to another quarter of the Assembly, must have experienced the chilling influence of departed power. Ireland would have been placed under the absolute dominion of the new Government. Such must have been the circumstances under which the Royal Epimenides would have awoke in February.<sup>1</sup> Might not the very consciousness of his son's being actually Regent, and the information that his first act of authority was to displace the Ministers, have tended to plunge the King's mind into new disorder? Is it quite certain that, after having been declared a

<sup>1</sup> Epimenides, a poet and prophet of Crete, was an ancient "Rip van Winkle." He is said, while tending his father's sheep, to have rested in a cave, where he slept for fifty-seven years. On his return to his home he found, to his amazement, his younger brother an old man.—ED.

lunatic by both Houses of Parliament—a fact which must have been communicated to every European sovereign by the British Envoys at their respective courts—George III. would have resumed the functions of Government? I know that he said to a nobleman who enjoyed much of his confidence—I mean the late Lord Walsingham—who related it to me :—“If a Regency had been established I would not have come forward to overturn it.” And though I make no question that his repugnance on that point would have been easily surmounted—for he loved power, and the exercise of it; he was no voluptuary nor votary of letters who would have been content with a splendid retirement at Windsor while his son governed)—yet, if the Prince of Wales had once occupied his vacant seat, it might not have been easy to restore things to their former situation.

While the Select Committee, to the number of twenty-one—where Pitt presided as chairman, and of which Burke, Sheridan, and other opposition leaders, were members—remained in constant examination of the physicians; the two parties exerted their utmost efforts, the one to retain and the other to augment, their respective adherents. Female auxiliaries were called into play on both sides. The Duchess of Devonshire, whose blandishments had so eminently conduced to Fox's success as representative for Westminster in 1784, renewed her powerful applications in favour of the heir-apparent. Pitt and Dundas opposed to her the Duchess of Gordon. Far inferior to her rival in feminine graces, in accomplishments of mind, and in elegance of manners, the last-mentioned Duchess possessed qualities not less useful—pertinacity which no obstacle could shake, masculine importunity, emancipation from ordinary forms—propelled by the hope of place, and by views of interest. Surrounded by

five daughters, three of whom were already marriageable, their establishment in life occupied all her thoughts. Inhabiting at the time the splendid mansion belonging to the Marquis of Buckingham in Pall Mall,<sup>1</sup> she there assembled on evenings a crowd of the most distinguished persons of both sexes, composed mostly of those attached to Administration. I was one of the number. She even acted as a whipper-in of Ministers. Confiding in her rank, her sex, and personal attractions, she ventured to send for Members of Parliament, to question, to remonstrate, and to use every means for confirming their adherence to Government. The Duke, her husband, who wanted her energy of character, did not on that account derive less benefit from her exertions. He received in due time the Great Seal of Scotland as his remuneration, while Lord William Gordon, his brother, Vice-Admiral of the same kingdom, had long been made Deputy Ranger of St. James's and of Hyde Parks—one of the most enviable sinecures in the gift of the crown.<sup>2</sup>

The Prince of Wales and Duke of York, on the other hand, brought into action more solid and substantial means of seduction than female charms or solicitations. About this time dinners began to be given at Carlton House on the Saturday and Sunday of every week, to which entertainments thirty or more members, composed of both Houses, were usually invited, and at which their Royal Highnesses presided in person. Wine, attentions, and promises were not spared. Governments, regiments, offices, preferments, titles, held out in prospect, retained the wavering, and allured the credu-

<sup>1</sup> Now a portion of the War Office.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Lord William died in 1823. His widow was allowed to keep possession of the Ranger's Lodge, in the Green Park, during her life. On her death, in 1841, the Lodge was pulled down.—ED.



lous or the discontented. Private negotiations were likewise set on foot in order to gain over the supporters of Government. A man of high rank made me propositions of that nature. But the object which he had in view extended much beyond my single vote. The nobleman to whom I allude, the late Earl of Clermont, well knew that the Duke of Dorset, then our Ambassador at the court of France, maintained with me a most unreserved correspondence. Through me they hoped to reach him, who likewise brought in two members for the borough of East Grinstead. I consented to lay before the Duke his Royal Highness's offers, which were of the most flattering nature, leaving him to appreciate them as he might think that they deserved. In his reply to me he expressed a grateful sense of the Prince's intentions, adding, however, at the same time, his determination to take no political step whatever without his uncle the Marquis of Stafford's participation and approval. His answer terminated the negotiation, or rather overture. The kingdom at large unquestionably gave its sanction to Ministers. So did the City of London, but in Westminster Fox's party predominated. Such was the aspect of public affairs towards the middle of the month of January.

[*13th January 1789.*] At length, after a week of incessant labour, Pitt, as Chairman of the Committee for re-examining the physicians, appeared at the bar of the House holding in his hand the report. But scarcely had he brought it up, when Burke moved for its recommitment, arraigned the conduct of the committee, and accused them of unfaithfully discharging their duty. "Why," he exclaimed, "had not the surgeons, apothecaries, and others, who had attended on his Majesty, been summoned before them to give evidence? There were, more-

over, additional grounds of complaint, consisting in the omission or concealment of many circumstances necessary for forming a just estimate of the King's state, and the probability of his cure." Against Willis Burke directed the most acrimonious remarks; averring that, in his own opinion, and he believed in the opinion of other members of the committee, "his Majesty's life was not safe in such hands." He added, however, "I do not mean to impute bad intentions to any individual. It is of the rashness of those to whom the care of his royal person is entrusted that I complain." Pitt treated with some degree of levity, not to say of ridicule, these charges. "The House," he said, "would not probably think the enquiry had been improperly narrowed, when the bulk of the report laid on the table, consisting of nearly four hundred folio pages, was duly considered. Every one of the physicians had undergone the most rigorous, as well as repeated examinations." Relative to the accusation of the King's life not being safe in such hands, "it arises," continued Pitt, "from the fact having been disclosed and avowed that Dr. Willis had trusted a razor in his Majesty's hand," an experiment which Willis justified by reasons founded on his long experience and knowledge of the disorder. Windham attempted to sustain Burke, but they did not venture to divide on the motion for recommitting the report. It was, therefore, ordered to be printed, the 16th of the month being fixed for taking into consideration the state of the nation.

[16th January 1789.] Never, perhaps, was greater and more general expectation excited than when the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose for the purpose of disclosing the conditions on which he proposed to offer the regency to the Prince of Wales. And never did that eloquent Minister acquit himself with

more consummate ability than on the evening in question. Blending the details of every feature of his plan with admirable brevity, Pitt began by observing that though the report recently laid on the table disclosed a vast mass of information on the subject of his Majesty's disorder, yet, in his opinion, it afforded little new matter for deliberation, and no grounds whatever for impeaching the propriety and prudence of those measures which, ten days earlier, he had been prepared to submit for their consideration. He followed up this remark by another, applied personally to Fox, who had argued that the probability of the King's cure was diminished, because a month had elapsed since the first inquiry, without any perceptible amelioration of his health; whereas, all the physicians, however divided they might be on other points, coincided in asserting that the ultimate cure rested precisely on the same foundation as it had done in December. Then discussing the depositions of the different medical attendants, comparing and contrasting them, he endeavoured to impress a conviction that, at least in the opinion of two—namely, Willis and Sir Lucas Pepys—there was an abatement of disorder, though, as yet, no resumption of reason. Finally, he entered into a defence of the Queen, who had subjected herself to some animadversions for having attempted, through the medium of the diurnal reports, or bulletins, to convey a more favourable impression of his Majesty's condition than was quite warranted by fact.

Pitt next proceeded to repeat the principles and bases on which he had already proposed to invest the heir-apparent with a considerable portion of the royal authority. Yet, in so doing, he conjured the House "to provide only for the necessity of the case, not to exceed it; and, above all things, to recollect that they were not placing a King on the throne,

but to bear in mind that the throne was full." Having reasoned, with great historical knowledge of the subject, on the immutable distinction between a Monarch and a Regent, he then enumerated the four principal restrictions necessary, as he conceived, to be imposed on the Prince of Wales. The first restrained him from granting peerages, except to his Majesty's sons, if they should previously have attained the age of twenty-one years. In order to impress the propriety of this regulation, as drawn from past experience, Pitt did not hesitate to urge "the possibility of such another confederacy and cabal forming in the state, as had attempted to overthrow the constitution in 1783." "They," continued he, "might offer advice to the Regent of a nature which would probably be rejected by the Crown. Such a number of Peers might in consequence be created as must greatly embarrass the sovereign in carrying on the Government whenever he shall be restored to health." It cannot be denied that the danger here depicted was founded in reason.

To the second restriction, by which the Regent was prevented from bestowing annuities or patent places for life; as well as to the third, which withheld from him all power over the king's personal property; little or no objection could be urged. On the fourth and last restraint, by which the care of his Majesty's person was to be consigned to the Queen, Pitt expatiated with more animation; "it being," he said, "his intention to put the whole Royal household under that Princess's authority, investing her with full powers to dismiss, or to appoint, at her pleasure." Conscious that such an independent control placed her in a sort of opposition to her son, and might even lead to collision between them, the Minister entered into some justification of its principle. In language of energy, he

depicted the emotions which must painfully rend the bosom of the King when "waking from his trance to reason, and asking for his usual attendants, if he should be told that his subjects, taking advantage of his temporary privation of intellect, had dismissed and changed them."

Having thus enumerated the restraints which he was desirous of imposing on the future Regent, Pitt candidly admitted that a retinue adequate to his high station ought to be provided for him by Parliament. Before the Minister concluded, he stated likewise his intention of proposing a Council for her Majesty, to the members of which body she might have recourse in cases of difficulty; limited, however, to the power of merely offering their advice. Neither Fox nor Burke rose to answer him. They well knew how much more forcibly the House would be affected by the appeal of a county member, who united independence of mind to distinguished talents, than by any display of oratory or eloquence. Powis combined in himself all those qualities. Almost every feature of the proposed plan he held up to condemnation, as "a monstrous fabric, calculated to mutilate and dismember the constitutional prerogatives entrusted to the crown. Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Powis, "is it necessary that the Government should be entirely new modelled? Are the regal rights inherent in the person of his Majesty? Or are they not annexed to the kingly office? Has the heir-apparent acted unbecomingly during his father's illness? Has he attempted by cabal or intrigues to wrest from the King his sceptre? Has he been guilty of the crime of treason?" "It is asserted that he may have bad advisers. May not the Queen too have bad advisers? The country will regard their conduct with peculiar jealousy." "I consider these resolutions," pursued he, "as likely to excite

animosities, not only throughout the kingdom, but in the royal family, and to arm the mother against her son. I regard them as equally subversive of the constitution with the East India Bill of 1783; and as I cannot consent to parcel out the prerogatives of the British crown at the pleasure of an individual, I will move an amendment."

Lord North and Sheridan both attacked the Minister; the former, with the arms of reason, exemplified and illustrated by appeals to history. Sheridan called in as auxiliaries not only his characteristic weapons of wit and ridicule, but he preferred personal accusations against Pitt. Lord North depicted with force the calamities that would infallibly arise from a violation of the constitution. Sheridan charged the Chancellor of the Exchequer with duplicity, arrogance, and calumny, repelling with scorn all the imputations which he had thrown on the Coalition Administration. After holding up Dr. Willis to universal reprobation, as an empiric, if not, as an impostor, on account of the favourable symptoms which he pretended to have discovered in the King's malady (every one of which became verified within a few weeks), Sheridan directed his next observations to a higher quarter. The manner in which the Queen had been mentioned appeared to be, he said, the result of premeditated design to provoke a discussion respecting her Majesty's conduct. Those persons only who wished to give her responsibility by taking her out of that domestic station in which she had acted so irreproachably, manifested a want of delicacy towards her. "The true motive," continued Sheridan, "of the Minister's line of policy is his belief that the Regent will change the Administration, and will place it in the hands of those who, as he dares to assert, have been convicted of a confederacy to overturn the constitu-

tion. Yet with them, after they had completed their Coalition, he had professed his readiness to form a junction." Towards the conclusion he drew an animated picture, or rather caricature, of the ex-Minister, as he designated Pitt, coming down in state, under the future regency, to the House, preceded by the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Master of the Horse, clearing his way through the lobby, with the cap of liberty borne before him on the end of a white staff.

Fullarton, strongly attached to the heir-apparent and equally averse to Pitt, attempted to draw a parallel between the reign of Charles VI., King of France, and that of George III. Both Sovereigns had been rendered incapable of conducting public affairs by a privation of intellect. Fullarton endeavoured to show that Isabella of Bavaria, Queen of France, and her confidential minister, Morvilliers—the former one of the most vicious as well as unnatural princesses commemorated in history, the latter an ambitious and unprincipled politician—were realised and resuscitated before their eyes. He depicted the Queen of Charles VI. as "a woman attached only to her treasures, influenced by the Chancellor, the Prime Minister, and other principal officers of the Court, who apprehended that if the Government should be entrusted to the heir-apparent during the King's incapacity they would lose their employments." Morvilliers was described by Fullarton "as commencing his career in the profession of the law, but speedily opening for himself a nearer road to greatness by the more productive path of politics." Finally, he portrayed the Prince, afterwards Charles VII. of France, "who possessed," he said, "not only the most interesting qualities and the most fascinating manners, but who had attached to his cause the noblest spirits and the

best abilities of his country." Some striking points of similarity unquestionably existed between the two periods of time, as well as a faint resemblance in the leading personages of each country sufficient at least to furnish matter for parliamentary declamation.

A division took place on Powis's amendment to Pitt's first resolution, which proposed to confer the regency on the heir-apparent, "subject to such limitations as should be provided;" Powis's object being to emancipate him in great measure from those restraints. Government carried the question by seventy-three votes. Fox, who suffered at the time under severe indisposition, which soon compelled him to discontinue his personal attendance, took no active part throughout the whole discussion. But when, after its decision, the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the next resolution, which precluded the future Regent from creating peers, Fox endeavoured to limit the duration of the restriction. A second division ensued, which Administration again carried, though with reduced numbers. The opposition rose from 154 to 159, while Government fell from 227 to 216, leaving a majority of only fifty-seven. I voted with ministers throughout every stage and on every question of this great conflict. Pitt's two subsequent resolutions—the first of which regarded annuities or patent places for life, and the latter withheld from the Regent any power over his father's personal property—were not contested. The House then adjourned, each side anticipating with anxiety the next proposition which would be agitated; namely, that of committing the King's person to her Majesty's care, and at the same time putting the whole Royal Household under her control. Fox postponed his departure for Bath until the event should be ascertained.

[19th January 1789.] When the House met, Pitt



immediately opened his proposition relative to the Queen. On the propriety of committing to her care the person of his Majesty, the Minister said that he would not anticipate an objection because he did not believe a difference of opinion to be possible on the subject. But he argued at considerable length the sound policy, propriety, and other motives combining to allot the direction of the Royal Household to the same hand. Pitt was powerfully supported on that night from various quarters. By Dundas, who for the first time since the commencement of the session took part in the debate, and who not only defended with his characteristic boldness the measure under deliberation, but accused the opposite party of bringing forward such dangerous doctrines as rendered it necessary to counteract them, thus occasioning all the delay that had intervened. By Scott, the Solicitor-General, whose conspicuous parliamentary as well as professional talents already opened to him a prospect of attaining the highest dignities of the law. Perhaps, nevertheless, Ministers derived more efficient service from Pulteney. His figure and dress, which always brought before my imagination Pope's Sir John Cutler—his whole wardrobe being threadbare—did not detract from the vigour of his understanding nor from the perspicuity of his arguments.

Throwing the whole force of his reason into the Ministerial scale, he treated with contempt the supposition either that the actual administration would factiously oppose the Prince's Ministers; or that these latter, if they conducted themselves well, could possibly fail of receiving general support. "What!" observed Pulteney, "cannot they govern without having the nomination of every butcher and baker belonging to the royal household! If they act uprightly they will stand in need of no such patronage. Even if a faction should arise, a dissolution of

Parliament is a remedy to which they can always have recourse. I was not present when the right of the two Houses to provide for the deficiency of the executive authority and to name a regent became matter of debate. But on such an occasion I would have given my hearty vote in its support, and I shall now vote as heartily in favour of the restrictions. Never will I admit the probability of a cabal being formed in the House of Peers hostile to the Regent's Ministers. If, indeed, another measure as unconstitutional as the memorable East India Bill should be again introduced, I readily allow that the bed-chamber lords may form a powerful obstacle to its progress." Fox did not rise till a very late hour; and as his design of quitting the scene of politics for a short time, in order to recover sufficient health for undertaking the charge of the foreign department, was well known, he drew more than ordinary attention. Addressing himself first to Scott the Solicitor-General, whom Fox accused of "endeavouring to entangle the understanding of his hearers in the sophistries of legal metaphysics," he successively adverted to the arguments of Dundas and of Pulteney. Conscious that the present occasion would be the last in which he should personally take any part before the decision of the regency question, he seemed to put out all his intellectual strength.

Scott having laid down as an incontrovertible proposition, that "the King's political character was in the eye of the law inseparable from his personal, and so would continue until his demise," Fox turned against this doctrine all the artillery of reason and of ridicule. "I consider such a tenet," said he, "as fitted only for ages of ignorance, when human institutions were deified, and declared to be of divine origin. That a sense of duty, loyalty, and affection

will animate the breast of every Englishman, and will lead him to protect his Majesty's sacred person, however long his malady may prove, is unquestionable. But when this is stated to be the definition of allegiance, I enter against it my protest. Allegiance is a reciprocal duty, arising in the heart, emanating from the mind, as a consequence of receiving protection, and it is only of equal existence. If the definition of allegiance given from the Treasury bench was well founded, whether the King's malady should continue for one year, or for thirty, the Legislature could never vest the full powers of the crown in any other hands, while the person of the sovereign remained on earth. That such is the latent design of Ministers I have no doubt, though at present they may think it prudent to conceal their intention."

Having depicted the hardship of precluding the Regent from the prerogative of creating Peers, while it was intended to place the household under the Queen's exclusive control; "To all this series of paradoxes," exclaimed he, "there can be only one solution. Ministers wish to insinuate the scandalous idea, that a division may take place between the mother and the son. I cannot utter in language of adequate indignation my abhorrence of such a plan. Yet I confess that the machination is artfully laid for accomplishing the intended purpose. I trust, however, that it will be prevented." "It has been asked," continued Fox, "what would be the consequence of the Queen's demise? If the Prince Regent should die, the mode of proceeding would be easy and simple. The next Prince in succession, the Duke of York, if alive, or Prince William Henry, would be appointed to the office. But if the Queen should die, in whose hands would they intrust the custody of the King? In those of the Duke of

York? Would ministers endeavour to divide the royal brothers? The attempt, I believe, they will find as difficult as to remove the planets from their orbits!" We have lived to see this supposititious case realised, thirty years after it was stated in Parliament.

Fox concluded his speech, many parts of which were unanswerable, by putting two questions to the Minister. First, if the custody of the royal household was to be given to the Queen, when was the provision intended for the Regent to be settled, and what was to be its extent? Secondly, if the intended restrictions were to have a limited duration, what period of time should he consider as proper for their continuance? To these inquiries the Chancellor of the Exchequer answered, that it was difficult to fix any precise term for the duration of the restrictions. "Should, however," continued he, "contrary to my sanguine expectation and belief, the King's recovery, after some time, be protracted, and should it be pronounced by his medical attendants unlikely to take place soon, my opinion would be to withdraw altogether the restrictions, including the prerogative of creating Peers. The establishment of the royal household may likewise then be revised and new-modelled." A more undefined and vague reply probably never proceeded from Ministerial lips. Desirous, nevertheless, to give some satisfaction on another very interesting point, Pitt added, "Whenever the Act of the two Houses shall have passed, constituting his Royal Highness Regent, a proper retinue ought to be immediately provided for supporting his station with becoming splendour. Of what precise extent the provision should be, I have not yet fully determined. The declaration made on the Prince's part, expressive of his reluctance to increase the national burthens, is most magnanimous.

But no dread of unpopularity shall deter me from proposing a new establishment, suitable to the illustrious rank and character of the Regent. I know not whether I shall be left to propose this matter, or whether it may not devolve to other hands. In either case, in or out of office, I am ready to stand up in my place, and to lay the additional expense where it ought to fall, on the public purse of the country."

By this guarded disclosure of his intentions, without naming any particular time for carrying them into execution, Pitt still kept his opponents in ignorance of his ultimate plans. If he had possessed a prescience of the King's speedy recovery, he could not have taken his measures with more consummate ability. Irritated at the obscurity of the Minister's replies, Sheridan reminded him that he had given no answer whatever as to the intended duration of the restrictions, while he had totally omitted to explain the nature and constitution of the Council which was to be provided for the Queen. Thus pressed, he somewhat reluctantly owned that it was impossible for him to state any fixed period for taking off the restrictions; but he added, "Parliament will always possess the power of removing them." To the other object of Sheridan's inquiry he gave a much more explicit reply. "It would only be a council of advice and in no degree of control. The great officers of state, with some dignified prelates, were intended to compose it." After a debate of full twelve hours a division at length took place on the question of giving to her Majesty the power of removing, and of appointing, at her pleasure, the officers of the King's household. One hundred and sixty-five votes negatived the proposition. The Minister was supported by 229, leaving him a majority of sixty-four. But Lord North im-

mediately afterwards moving to add the words, "for a limited time," the House divided again, when Pitt's followers fell to 220, while the opposite side lost one vote, being 164. Consequently Government carried the point only by fifty-six.

The debate was now terminated, when Pulteney offered a clause for limiting both the duration of the proposed restrictions and of the powers to be conferred on the Regent by Parliament. But Pitt, who, while he affected to propel the decisions of the House, nevertheless proceeded with measured steps, like a man desirous, as far as he was able, of allowing time its full operation, though he professed his general coincidence of sentiment with Pulteney, and a readiness to adopt the proposition itself, yet dexterously evaded its immediate acceptance. Fox contented himself with observing that such repeated elections of the chief magistrate, however he might be denominated Regent, in fact changed the constitution from a limited monarchy to a republic. The various resolutions successively moved by Pitt being finally passed, were ordered to be communicated to the Lords at a conference between the managers of the two Houses on the following day. To that assembly all eyes were directed, and the Commons, in order to allow time for their deliberations, suspended their own by an adjournment of a week. Fox, extenuated by exertions, and enfeebled by a complaint the seat of which lay in the liver, after vainly contesting against Administration, set out for Bath, Burke and Sheridan remaining at their posts to dispute the ground with Pitt.

[20th—26th January 1789.] Two debates, each marked by circumstances of much personal asperity, took place in the Upper House on the 22d and 23d of January. The former was opened by Lord Camden, then in the seventy-fourth year of his age,

who, after the first resolution sent up from the Commons had been read, observed that "his advanced period of life furnishing the strongest reason for his retirement from public business, he trusted the present act would form the last effort of his political existence." Throughout his whole speech he displayed all his characteristic intellectual superiority, though the great energies of character which had distinguished him during the early part of George III.'s reign in the cause of freedom appeared to be sinking under the pressure of time. Not so the Chancellor, who, as if he designed to atone for his meditated defection at an early stage of the King's malady, unfolded all the powers of his capacious and vigorous intellect. But the most conspicuous exhibition of Parliamentary eloquence made on that night was by Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, a prelate of no ordinary ability or ambition, who has left us memoirs of his own life. His speech, which occupied nearly two hours in the delivery, would unquestionably have secured him an English mitre of the most solid description, and probably have translated him to Durham or to Winchester, if the Regency had been consummated, and its supporters had remained permanently in possession of power. The King's recovery chained him down for life to an obscure Welsh diocese. On the resolution being read which restricted the Regent from the prerogative of creating peers, the Earl of Sandwich moved to add the words, "for a time to be limited." A division taking place, the motion was negatived by a majority of twenty-six peers, the respective numbers being 93 to 67. And the House dividing a second time on the main question, Ministers carried it by twenty-eight votes.

The discussion was renewed on the subsequent evening, chiefly relative to the resolution committing

to her Majesty the custody of the King's person, accompanied with the control and management of the royal household. Towards its close the Chancellor might be said to sustain and to repel, almost unassisted, the whole weight of opposition, conducted by Lords Loughborough and Stormont. Thurlow, standing as it were over the prostrate body of his sovereign, claimed for him the respect due to his lamentable situation,—“a misfortune,” he observed, “equal to any which had ever fallen to the lot of man since misfortune was known on earth!” “I cannot conjecture,” exclaimed he, “upon what principle it is possible to place the King in her Majesty's hands, without committing to her the superintendence of the household, nor how the dignity of a sovereign can be preserved unless he retains his attendants. Let it be remembered that he is not a destitute individual, friendless or obscure, but a monarch to whom his people look up with anxious wishes that he may speedily reascend his throne. Any other treatment must manifest a total want of compassion for that royal sufferer, who then would be

‘Deserted in his utmost need  
By those his former bounty fed!’”

The sensibility which the Chancellor displayed throughout this part of his speech, and which was not confined to himself, excited Burke's spleen, who treated it as hypocritical grimace. When the House of Commons met, a few days afterwards, he compared “the tears shed in another assembly to the iron tears that ran down Pluto's cheek,” protesting at the same time that “they were not tears of patriots for dying laws, but of lords for their expiring places. They were tears for his Majesty's bread.”

Lord Stormont, touched at Thurlow's citation, im-



mediately rose, and observed that however general might be the application of the words just quoted, yet he could not avoid considering them as peculiarly addressed to himself. "I have, indeed, my lords," continued he, "enjoyed the highest honours and passed the greatest part of my life in the enjoyment of emoluments conferred by his Majesty. I come, therefore, under the description of those individuals who have largely shared in the royal bounty. But I trust that I have not repaid them with ingratitude. I love his Majesty, I love the Prince of Wales, but I love still more the constitution. This declaration I now make in presence of some members of the royal family, and I shall not hesitate to repeat it before my sovereign himself, if I am ever restored to his presence." Reverting to the subject under deliberation, he reasoned with force, sustained by examples drawn from history, against a system which might oppose the mother to her son. "Recollect, my lords," said he, "the instance of Mary of Medecis and Louis XIII., where an artful Minister set them at variance. In my opinion, the person who is intrusted with the King's custody ought not to have the control over the household. It is cruel thus to throw her Majesty on a stormy political sea, without a rudder, chart, or compass." "Who may be her advisers I know not, but she may have counsellors who may persuade her that she cannot render a greater service to her son and to the country than by attempting to rescue him from the pernicious hands in which he has reposed his confidence. From the division of power contemplated I expect to see the standard of opposition erected in the centre of the Queen's palace." It must be admitted that if the Regency had permanently taken place these apprehensions were not altogether destitute of foundation nor of probability. Lord Loughborough

not only maintained the same propositions, but declared in terms the most precise that, far from abandoning his assertion of the Prince of Wales's right to the Regency during his father's incapacity, he was ready to defend it against the Chancellor. On the division 96 peers supported Ministers, while only 68 voted with their opponents.

[*26th and 27th January 1789.*] Pitt's numerical superiority being now incontestably ascertained by repeated divisions in both Houses, and Fox having personally withdrawn, the contest might in some measure be considered as terminated. But altercation and reproaches survived the struggle for power. The Chancellor of the Exchequer informing the House at its meeting that he should propose to lay the resolutions before the Prince of Wales in order to know whether his Royal Highness would accept of the Regency on those conditions, Burke started up under violent agitation. Every part of the Minister's conduct, he said, was despotic in the extreme. He had forced the discussion on the question of right merely for purposes of delay. He had in fact thus addressed the House:—"Slaves, do you presume to hesitate or hint a doubt on the point? I will satisfy your scruples. The question shall be debated and decided." Unintimidated by the indecent severity of these remarks, Pitt did not the less move on the subsequent evening "for appointing a committee to communicate to his Royal Highness the resolutions of the Lords and Commons, expressing at the same time their hopes that he would comply by taking on him the office of Regent as speedily as an Act of Parliament could be passed." This proposition called out all the leaders from the opposite benches. Sheridan observed that the resolutions appeared to be final and permanent, not as if calculated to answer a tempo-

rary emergency, though upon that single ground, urged repeatedly by the Minister himself, had they been voted. Another matter, Sheridan added, which still remained wholly unexplained, was the degree of state and attendance intended to be annexed to the office of Regent as a substitute for that power and patronage taken from him by the last resolution. He concluded by moving to add that "the restrictions were formed on the supposition that his Majesty's illness was only temporary, and might not prove of long duration." It seemed difficult to suppose that Pitt could make any objection to insert these words, they being extracted from his own letter addressed to the Prince of Wales on the preceding 30th of December.

Grey rising next, accused the Minister of having manifested a want of respect towards the heir-apparent throughout every stage of his intercourse with Carlton House, a charge which Grey laboured to prove by an enumeration of various particulars. There seemed, however, to be more of enmity than of justice in these details, as they amounted, even if well founded, rather to breaches of etiquette, or omissions of form, than to any disrespectful intention. But Burke far exceeded both his friends in violence. The question, he maintained, was obviously an endeavour to create unnecessary delay, as was the whole Ministerial system, to convert the constitution into a republic, by the annual election of a regent. "If," continued he, "it is intended to erect a republic, why is it not avowed? Should I be asked whether I dislike a commonwealth, I would answer, No. I am, however, aware that, according to our frame of government, we cannot speculate on a republic." Having then eulogised, in language the most picturesque and classic, the true republican principles as transmitted down to us from antiquity,

which he declared were objects of his utmost reverence and idolatry, he burst at once into a paroxysm of rage at "the phantom, the fiction of law," as he denominated it, by which Pitt intended to open the session of parliament. "So far is it," vociferated he, "from representing faithfully the forms of our admirable constitution, that it is a mere mummer<sup>y</sup>, a piece of masquerade buffoonery, formed to burlesque every species of government! A hideous spectre, to which, with Macbeth, when addressing the ghost of Banquo, we may exclaim,

" 'Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!  
Thy bones are marrowless; thy blood is cold.  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
That thou dost glare with.'

So is it with this ministerial political spectre. Its bones are marrowless, its blood is cold, and it has no speculation in its eyes. I reprobate it as a chimera, a monster summoned up from the depths of hell!" This beautiful picture, which seemed to electrify the House, excited great admiration, even on the Treasury bench.

Pitt repelled with temperate composure his numerous and eloquent assailants. To Sheridan he replied, that the proposed amendment, though consisting of words taken out of his own letter to the Prince of Wales, yet was only a partial selection of them, omitting other words which followed, and formed their explanation. He therefore should object to any such insertion. The delays which had hitherto impeded the progress of the Regency Bill, he demonstrated to have originated, not with Ministers, but with their opponents. Turning next to Grey, he recapitulated the various acts, either of omission and neglect, or of positive disrespect towards the heir-apparent, with which he stood

charged, justifying himself on each, as it appeared to me, in a manner the most satisfactory to any candid mind. "The highest tribute of respect," continued he, "that I can offer to every branch of the royal family, is to cultivate the interests of the nation which their ancestors were called to govern, and to watch over the safety of that constitution, in the protection of which the Prince himself will be eventually interested." Having thus answered two of his opponents, he omitted any reply to Burke, whose arguments, though fabricated by genius and illuminated by fancy, produced no solid impression. Sheridan still persisted in his amendment, the objection made to which by the Chancellor of the Exchequer he endeavoured to obviate by adding to his motion the remaining words of the sentence contained in Pitt's letter to the Prince of Wales. But the question being carried without a division, for communicating to his Royal Highness the resolutions of the two Houses, Pitt then moved an address to the Queen. Its object was to ascertain whether she would accept the care of his Majesty's person, together with the management and control of the royal household. No opposition was attempted.

[28th—31st January 1789.] The Minister's situation during the last days of January was nevertheless peculiarly arduous and critical. From the summit of power, he beheld himself suddenly about to be precipitated by an event of the most unexpected nature, against which he neither had taken, or could take, any measure of precaution. Three months had already elapsed since the King's seizure, and no indications of restoration to intellect were as yet perceptible. The violence of the delirium or frenzy had, indeed, greatly abated, and Willis confidently anticipated his speedy resumption of reason. But Warren as confidently maintained the contrary posi-

tion. Pitt possessed no landed estate, no funded property, nor even life annuity. He had disdained to bestow on himself the clerkship of the pells, and it was not till some years later that he was made Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. His brother, Lord Chatham, as necessitous as Pitt, could afford him no relief. I doubt whether the First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, when his debts were discharged, possessed £1000. Europe might then have witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of a Prime Minister not yet thirty, who, after distributing nearly forty British peerages, besides fifteen Irish; after creating a sinking fund of a million sterling, humbling France, and by the vigour of his councils extricating Holland from subservience to the House of Bourbon, was reduced to return for support to the bar, as in antiquity Cincinnatus went back to the plough. Pitt unquestionably meditated to resume his original profession. By what other means, in fact, could he have maintained his personal independence? Fox, destitute of any such resource, found himself compelled to accept the assistance of his friends at a subsequent period of his life, however painful it might be to his feelings. Dundas's situation was scarcely less destitute, in a pecuniary point of view, than that of Pitt.

Nor were the embarrassments of the Minister by any means merely future and prospective. In his own Cabinet he had to encounter daily impediments, or mortifications, arising from the rugged, intractable temper of the Chancellor, who frequently would neither advise, dictate, nor comply. These internal agitations, which could not always be concealed from the public ear, served to invigorate opposition. I remember Sir Grey Cooper, when alluding, on the 27th of January, to Pitt's assertion that "the two Houses of Parliament constituted the only legal

organs through which the voice of the people could be heard during the King's indisposition," observed that "perhaps, by some accident, one of those organs might be out of tune. Whispers of such a discord had been heard; and, therefore, till that instrument was again restored to order, and the great leaders of the band should have settled their respective parts in the concert, an interlude might probably be played off to amuse this House." Burke, in the course of the same evening, spoke out even more plainly on the subject. "I know not," said he, "whether the postponement of the present measure in the other House, which was intended to have come on last night, arose from any difference among Ministers; but a little bird, a small robin redbreast, has sung that something of the kind has taken place. The same bird has whispered in my ear that certain secret reasons have suddenly induced the House of Peers to shift the business from their own to our shoulders. Perhaps that dignified assembly has not yet recovered from the effect caused by the burst of the pathetic lately exhibited. They probably have not yet dried their eyes, and may be therefore at present incapable of attending to new business."

Pitt, it is true, denied the truth of these painful reports. "I can assure the House," said he, "notwithstanding the mysterious insinuations of a want of harmony among Ministers, that there has arisen no such difference of opinion." The Chancellor did not, however, confirm the declaration thus made; for, on the following evening, the 28th of January, during the debate which arose in the Upper House, relative to the two proposed addresses to the Prince and to the Queen, he said, while replying to Lord Stormont, "I own that I could have chalked out a plan which I should have approved in preference to the line that has been adopted. But, when I con-

sider that many other men's opinions must be consulted, the present measure is perhaps the best that could be brought forward during the agitation of the moment." He could not more unequivocally avow the dissensions that prevailed in the Ministerial councils. Meanwhile, the Peers having concurred in the resolutions adopted by the Commons for addressing the Prince and Queen, Earl Camden and the Marquis of Stafford were ordered to wait on his Royal Highness, in order to receive his answer. Pitt, accompanied by the Master of the Rolls, Lord Frederick Campbell, and Sir George Yonge, performed, on the part of the Commons, the same function. The heir-apparent received this deputation at Carlton House on the 30th of January, an anniversary on which, as commemorative of the decapitation of Charles I., neither of the two Houses met for the dispatch of public business. The imperious necessity of restoring the Executive Government superseded, however, every other consideration. On the same day the address was carried up to her Majesty at Kew, by two members of the Upper and four members of the Lower House.

[31st January 1789.] The Prince's answer, of which Sheridan was considered the composer, manifested great discontent at the manner of offering him the regency, and at the conditions annexed to its exercise; though, he added, that "his anxious concern for the public safety, and his respect for the united desires of the two Houses, determined him to undertake the trust." He contrived, however, to embody in his reply the very words which Sheridan had vainly endeavoured to insert in Pitt's motion of the 27th of January, for communicating to his Royal Highness the resolutions of the Lords and Commons. "Confiding," said he, "that the limitations on the exercise of the royal authority have been



approved only as a temporary measure, founded on the hope that his Majesty's disorder may not be of long duration, I accede to your wishes." The Queen's reply was brief, but mingled with testimonies of her respect for the desire manifested by Parliament to commit to her care the King's person. As soon as the Peers met, after the answers of the Queen and Prince had been read, Lord Camden stated that the next necessary step was to determine on the means by which the royal assent might be given to such bills as should have been passed by the two Houses respecting the exercise of the powers of the Crown. "I am aware," observed he, "that the means by which it is intended to open the Parliament have been contemptuously stigmatised elsewhere as a fiction and a phantom. But it is a fiction admirably calculated for preserving the constitution. The King must be upon his throne in this assembly, or by some mode he must sanction our proceedings. Otherwise, Parliament is a mere headless trunk, incapable of legislation. The legal and constitutional expedient is by issuing letters patent under the Great Seal, authorising a commission to open Parliament in his Majesty's name."

"If there exist any other means of accomplishing this national object," continued he, "I hope those who so think will suggest them. But I venture to assert that whoever treats as matter of ridicule the mode that I have proposed is ignorant of the laws of his country. The commission must be issued by authority of some kind. Can the Prince of Wales command the Chancellor to put the seal to such a commission? Certainly he cannot. Both Houses have recently voted that he possesses no such right. Would the Chancellor himself unauthorised venture to do it? Undoubtedly he would not. The Great Seal is the organ by which the Sovereign speaks his

will. An Act of Parliament, passed by authority of a commission issued under it, must be received as a part of the statute law of the land." Having thus explained the intended mode of proceeding as well as the principle on which it was founded, Lord Camden added that when the Bill appointing a regent should have gone through all its forms, it would become necessary to affix the Great Seal to a second commission, giving the royal assent to such a Bill. He concluded by moving, that "it is expedient and necessary to issue a proper commission for opening the Parliament under the Great Seal." The Duke of York, who was present, in a few words protested against the whole system; but in particular against the measure proposed as unconstitutional and illegal. "I therefore request," added he, "that my name may be left out of the Commission, and I am authorised to express a similar desire on the part of the Prince of Wales." Rising in his turn, the Duke of Cumberland intimated the same wish both for himself and for his brother the Duke of Gloucester.

Severe indisposition having prevented both the Chancellor and Lord Loughborough from attending in their places on that evening, Lord Stormont replied to the arguments of Earl Camden. "We might," said he, "my lords, have appointed a regent full six weeks ago, if the discussion of the question of right had not been obtruded on us. With respect to the two Commissions intended to be issued under the Great Seal, the first is informal, the second is illegal. It has been asserted that necessity warrants the mode of proceeding, and that necessity justifies it. I subscribe to the doctrine, but I deny its application in the present instance. What impediment has prevented Ministers from addressing the Prince of Wales to take upon him the exercise of the whole legislative authority of the Crown?"—"The pro-

ceedings of the two Houses within the last three months have conducted more to introduce and to sanction republican principles than all the public acts done in my time. I rail not at republican principles. I know how beautiful they appear in theory, but they are not the less repugnant to the genius of our constitution." In the absence of Lord Thurlow rose Lord Hawkesbury. While a member of the House of Commons he spoke rarely, always with brevity, and since his elevation to the peerage, except on questions connected with trade or manufactures, scarcely had his voice been heard in that assembly. With great force of reason he combated the propositions of Lord Stormont, demonstrated that the measure under consideration was governed by the necessity of the case without exceeding it; while he pointed out the total dissimilarity between the Revolution of 1688, when the two Houses of Parliament addressed the Prince of Orange to assume the Sovereign authority on a principle of necessity, and the contrast presented by the present position of affairs. The throne, he observed, was then vacant, and all the functions of Government suspended: whereas the throne was now full, the courts of law open, and Parliament assembled.

[*2d and 3d February 1789.*] The debate having terminated without any division, it was moved to report the resolution immediately to the House in order to accelerate its progress, though on a Saturday, which being done the Commission for opening the Parliament was instantly filled up for the subsequent Tuesday, the 3d of February. A conference with the Commons was requested to be held on Monday the 2d for the purpose of communicating to them the resolution and desiring their concurrence. It took place accordingly on that day, the whole pro-

ceeding of the two Houses forming an instance of legislative despatch probably not to be exceeded in the British Parliamentary annals. The conference being ended and the resolution of the Upper House read, together with the answers of the Prince of Wales and of the Queen to the deputation from both Houses, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to agree with the Peers in their resolution. Lord North, who, notwithstanding his want of sight, performed an active part throughout all the debates during the course of the King's malady, warmly attacked the Minister on this occasion. Having censured the spirit of distrust and jealousy which pervaded every feature of the proceedings relative to the heir-apparent, Lord North added, "His Royal Highness's answer must diffuse universal satisfaction. It must even create an agreeable surprise throughout the kingdom, and extinguish those false alarms which have been so industriously circulated that the Prince had asserted his right to assume the Sovereign authority independently of the two Houses of Parliament."

Pitt was not formed tamely to endure such a reprehension, which he repelled with great fortitude and equal force. "The noble lord," said he, "observes that a general, though false alarm, has been diffused through the country lest the question of right should be supported. I deny the truth of his proposition. I allow, indeed, that it was not claimed by the Prince of Wales, but it was asserted by others. That no person has been bold enough to advise him to assert such a right after the solemn decision of the two Houses of Parliament, cannot form matter of surprise. Even if any man could be found so bold, it is very improbable that a Prince of the House of Brunswick would follow such advice. I readily admit that his Royal Highness's acceptance of the Regency will furnish subject of joy to

the people, but not that it can prove a matter of surprise. They will not be disposed to censure Parliament for reprobating unconstitutional doctrines, started by men who now lament their own assertions, which they are ashamed to avow, and seem desirous to retract."

If Lord North's observations had aroused Pitt, the pointed sarcasms of the latter against Fox irritated Burke almost to a degree of madness. "I assert," exclaimed he, "that the Prince of Wales's right to the Regency is as clear as the sun; and that it is the duty of this House to appoint him Regent, with the full powers of sovereignty. His Royal Highness's right is founded in law, in justice, and in equity." Then bursting into one of his grand and eccentric appeals to the fancy, "The Minister's plan," continued he, "merits a worse name than to be called a phantom. Ministers are preparing to create the monster of Sin and Death described by Milton: death to the constitution, sin to the feelings of the country. They are giving birth to innumerable barking monsters, eager to destroy every principle of our constitution. They are about to purloin the Great Seal, to commit an act of forgery and of fraud, to support violence, and to consummate their climax of villany. Their delays keep pace with every other part of their system. How unlike the Convention Parliament in 1688, who completed all their objects of national benefit between the 26th of December and the 12th of the ensuing month, finishing the whole work in sixteen days!" "I contend that the House has no right to authorise the Lord Chancellor to put the Great Seal to forgery, thus giving it the form of royal authority instead of the substance. Such violations of law are delusions. They are only the sweepings of the cobwebs of

Westminster Hall; the smoke of the dish, not its nourishment."

With more temper, Sheridan denied that Fox had ever maintained the Prince's right to assume the exercise of the royal authority without the adjudication of the two Houses of Parliament. "The question of right was therefore," added he, "unnecessarily agitated, because the right of the two Houses to provide for the defect in the exercise of the sovereign power never was contested."

Powis sustained Burke's opinions. "In order," said he, "to open a Parliament there must exist a person competent to authorise the act; either the King himself, or his representative. In the present case there can be neither; and the place will be filled by a fictitious, imaginary phantom." The resolution to agree with the Lords being nevertheless carried without any division, a motion was made and voted to request another conference with that House. Before the adjournment took place, Pitt, in answer to a question made from the Opposition bench, demanding "what measure was next to ensue," explained, in the most explicit terms, his intentions. "I trust," said he, "that we may carry up the resolution to the conference early on this very day. The commission being ready sealed, Parliament may be opened forthwith; and as soon as we are returned, I shall instantly move for leave to bring in a bill for appointing a Regent, founded on those resolutions.

[3rd February 1789.] The time was now arrived when the two Houses, who had hitherto acted as a convention, were to assume the form of a Parliament assembled according to the established usages of the constitution. Every impediment and delay, which during nearly two months had prevented a change of Administration, being at length removed, new Ministers, together with a new order of things,

might be speedily and confidently expected. Pitt, who had so long, and with so much general approbation, occupied the first place in the State, beheld in prospect a private station ; while Fox, twice driven by his own errors from the Cabinet, prepared to re-enter it under better auspices. The Queen, selected by Parliament not only to have the custody of the King's person, but the control of the whole royal household, was about to be invested with extensive power, patronage, and influence. Among all the legislative dispositions made by Pitt for conducting the Government during his Majesty's incapacity, the wisdom, as well as the necessity, of thus arming the Queen with a degree of independent authority in the State might appear the most doubtful. I am nevertheless of opinion, that her good sense, experience, moderation, and the strong maternal affection which animated her throughout her whole life towards her eldest son—an affection amounting to predilection, and which he as warmly returned—would have secured the country from any personal collision between them. Mary of Medicis was a violent, implacable, weak, misguided woman, destitute of attachment to Louis XIII., the most unamiable of princes ; who had likewise imbibed an early conviction that she was not wholly unacquainted with his father's assassination. There could not, therefore, exist the slightest degree of real analogy between the two cases, though Lord Stormont had recently compared them. Yet, if we consider how much power corrupts the heart, and how much party inflames the passions, we shall probably think it equally fortunate for herself and for the nation that she should not have been placed in a situation so trying to human nature.

Among the political caricatures which appeared in the shops of the capital about this time was a

print representing the Chancellor, Pitt, and Dundas in the characters of the "three weird sisters," wildly but characteristically attired, standing on a heath intently gazing on the full moon. Her orb appeared half enlightened, half eclipsed. The part averted, which remained in darkness, contained the King's profile. On the other side, resplendent with light and graciously regarding the three gazers, was portrayed a head of the Queen. The circumstance of Dundas being thus ranked with Pitt and Thurlow sufficiently indicates the degree of political consideration which he attracted, and how much higher he stood in the public estimation as a man possessed of power or influence than any of the remaining Cabinet Ministers. He was in fact far superior to either of the Secretaries of State in real weight and consequence. So certain and so imminent appeared the Prince of Wales's appointment to the Regency during the first days of February that medals were struck and sold commemorating the event. One of them which I purchased at the time lies now before me. It is of mean execution, presenting no favourable specimen of the arts in that line. The size is between a shilling and a half-crown piece; the composition a base metal designed to imitate silver. On one side appears his Royal Highness's side face, the hair dressed in small curls as then worn, which might easily be mistaken for a tie-wig loosely floating down his back. The resemblance of his countenance is bad and vulgar. He wears a coat embroidered at the button-holes, a part of his star just appearing, with a prodigious *jabot* or frill of lace at the breast. Such was the costume of that time. Round it is this legend or inscription:—

"PRINCE REGENT OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND  
IRELAND, &c."



On the reverse are engraven the ostrich plumes of the Prince of Wales, with the "Ich dien" on a label, surrounded by the words—

"BORN AUGUST 12, 1762,  
APPOINTED FEB. 1789."

This medal, struck in order to perpetuate a fact which never was realised, is now probably become very rare.

Carlton House, to which residence the destinies of Great Britain were apparently about to be transferred from St. James's, presented in its interior, during the first days of February, as may well be supposed, a scene of political intrigue and contending interests. The place of First Lord of the Treasury was of course reserved for the Duke of Portland, but relative to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer and its future possessor there prevailed much uncertainty. Lord John Cavendish had indeed been named to it by the public voice, though he neither emulated to resume that situation, nor in truth were his talents, either financial or parliamentary, adequate to conduct it with becoming dignity and credit to himself. Common report asserted that Sheridan aspired to fill it, the Prince approving and supporting his pretension. Absurd or improbable as such a story may appear, many circumstances conduced to diminish its incredibility. During Fox's absence and Lord Loughborough's indisposition, Sheridan occupied a very high, if not the first rank in his Royal Highness's confidence and councils. Nor ought we to wonder at the fact. His talents, as a member of the House of Commons, yielded to none within those walls. I believe Pitt stood more in awe of them, if he could be said to stand in awe of anything, than he did of Fox himself. Sheridan moreover possessed other qualities

not less calculated to acquire the favour of the heir-apparent. His convivial powers rendered him equally delightful in society, as his vast intellectual endowments qualified him to shine in Parliament or in the Cabinet. Fox's predominant passion, to which he had devoted his youth and sacrificed his fortune, was play. Sheridan supremely loved wine, of which he swallowed vast quantities—a recommendation of no common order in the Court and at the table of a prince who in that respect emulated the younger Cyrus if in no other feature of his character. Neither Lord Rawdon, who deservedly stood high in his Royal Highness's personal regard—nor Grey, nor Windham, nor Erskine, though all partaking of his confidence, and frequently the companions of his private hours, were able to maintain a conflict over the bottle with an antagonist like Sheridan. His face, even at this period of his life, when he had not long completed his thirty-seventh year, began to exhibit eloquent proofs of his intemperance.

But there still remained a third cause of the ascendant which Sheridan exercised at Carlton House—I mean the prominent part that he had always taken in defence of Mrs. Fitzherbert's interests, honour, and character. When Fox came forward in the House of Commons to disavow and to deny from authority, in the most formal terms, the asserted matrimonial ceremony between her and the heir-apparent, we have seen that Sheridan contrived, without contradicting his friend, to do away in a great degree the effect of his assurances. The words chosen by Sheridan on the occasion were admirably calculated to throw a mysterious veil over the transaction and to give it a sort of sanctity, while he paid the highest testimonies to the distinguished merits of the lady herself. She still continued to enjoy the first place in the Prince's affections, and

her future destiny formed at this time an object of general curiosity. What would she become, it was asked, under the approaching Regency? Many persons believed that as soon as the restrictions should be taken off a very high rank of the peerage would be immediately conferred on her. But though George I. made one of his two mistresses Duchess of Kendal, the other Countess of Darlington, and though George II. imitated his father's example by creating Madame de Walmoden Countess of Yarmouth for her life, yet I doubt whether any Minister in 1789 would have advised or sanctioned the adoption by the Regent of a similar measure.<sup>1</sup>

Sheridan's want of high birth and connections could not of itself form an insurmountable impediment to his being placed at the head of the Exchequer if there had existed no greater obstacle. Have we not, in fact, beheld a provincial physician's son, of very moderate abilities, raised in 1801 to the post of First Minister, presiding over both the Treasury and the Exchequer during more than three years? Canning's descent, who has so ably filled and continues at this hour to fill Cabinet offices, was not more illustrious than that of Sheridan, which produced during three successive generations men of eminent talents. Nor could Sheridan's want of property have excluded him, since Pitt as well as Fox shared with him that defect. But among us morals no less than talents are indispensable to ensure political elevation!

[3d—6th February 1789.] The month of January

<sup>1</sup> Lord Stourton, in the narrative by him, quoted by Mr. Langdale in the latter gentleman's "Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert," says:—"She went so far with respect to Mr. Fox that when afterwards, during his administration, he made some overtures to her in order to recover her goodwill, she refused, though the attainment of the rank of Duchess was to be the fruit of their reconciliation. On naming this circumstance to me, she observed that she did not wish to be another Duchess of Kendal."—D.

had expired under the most gloomy presages respecting the King's restoration to reason. Having remained more than three months in a state of total alienation of mind—or rather of decided lunacy—the daily reports issued by the medical attendants, which at first were eagerly read, no longer excited the same emotions. Varying little from one day to another in their nature and contents, they ceased to awaken any lively hope, or almost to inspire strong curiosity. All the delays that had hitherto impeded the formation of a Regency being at length surmounted, men of every description looked forward to the transfer of the sceptre from George III. to the hands of his son, when, to the astonishment of all, to the joy of the bulk of the nation, but to the unspeakable disappointment of many individuals, a salutary change began to manifest itself in the disorder. It commenced early in February, advancing progressively with the month, and indicating an imperfect return or resumption of reason. One of the first symptoms that he gave of it happened in the following manner. Either on the 4th or 5th of February a friend of mine, Mr. Robert Greville, brother of the late Earl of Warwick, then one of his Majesty's equerries, and in waiting at the time, happened to be standing near the King's bed at Kew, engaged in conversation with Dr. Willis. Both of them were unprepared for, and unapprehensive of, his either listening to or understanding their discourse. Greville observed to Willis that Lord North had made many inquiries after his Majesty's health. "Has he," said the King. "Where did he make them? At St. James's, or here?" On their replying to his question, "Lord North," said he, is a good man, unlike the others. He is a good man." The King formed a perfectly just estimate of Lord North. Party and politics had driven him

to take refuge under the shield of the coalition, but an early and deep-rooted affection for his old master survived in his bosom. Throughout the whole progress of the royal disorder Burke, on the contrary, displayed little concern or sympathy for him, but much indecorous impatience to arrive at power.

The Commons having met on the 3rd of February and agreed to the resolution of the Lords, a message was sent down from the Upper House desiring their attendance at the act of reading the commission. Lord Bathurst, as the representative of the Chancellor, who was still absent from indisposition, briefly stated the causes of convoking Parliament. Every form incident to opening the session in the accustomed manner having been observed, as soon as the Speaker and the members present were returned from the bar of the Lords, Pitt moved for leave to bring in a bill consonant to the purposes enumerated by Lord Bathurst. No objection being made, he introduced it on the 5th, when it was read a first time, with little other interruption than a few indignant comments from Burke; but upon the subsequent evening that extraordinary man unlocked all the stores of his eloquence to oppose its further progress. "The duration of his Majesty's malady," said Burke, "lies hidden in the secret recesses of the dispensations of Providence. He is insane; but his disease is not intermittent, nor has it any lucid intervals and partial visitations of reason. His faculties are totally eclipsed. Not a partial, but a total and entire eclipse. The present bill is indefinite in its duration, because that bold promiser, Dr. Willis himself, cannot venture to fix a time when the King may be able to resume his functions. And as he, whose temerity would impel him to decide on that point if the thing were possible, does not hazard an opinion on it, we may well presume

that physicians of cooler judgment will not even pronounce a conjecture on the subject."

"The bill," continued Burke, "is intended not only to degrade the Prince, but the whole Brunswick family, who are to be outlawed and attainted, as having forfeited all claim to the confidence of the country. This House is now scattering the seeds of future dissensions in the royal family, verging to treasons, for the perpetration of which acts public justice will one day overtake and bring Ministers to trial. According to the provisions of the bill, as it is drawn up, until the Queen shall think proper to assert that the King is recovered, the people possess no means of knowing the fact. If, therefore, her Council should declare it, and that his Majesty shall be able to sit in a chair at the head of that Council, the bill provides that he shall be declared capable. What is this enactment, except putting into the hands of Dr. Willis and his keepers the whole power of changing the Government? A person who has been insane may be so subdued by coercion as to become capable of submitting to act the farce appointed, and of appearing for a short period to have resumed his intellects. I maintain the utter impossibility of adducing proof, whether a person who has been insane is perfectly recovered or not. The whole business is a scheme, under the pretence of pronouncing his Majesty recovered, to bring back an insane King."

However indecorous and censurable some passages of this speech may appear, and whatever condemnation they excited at the time when they were pronounced, yet Burke's observations were not destitute of justice. If the King's restoration of reason had proved partial and temporary, instead of complete, many of the predicted or supposed evils might have been realised. Happily, in 1789 his

recovery was rapid and total. So was it in 1801. But throughout the whole spring of 1811, I know that he floated between sanity and insanity, till finally his mind seemed to become effete and extinct. Fortunately his eldest son, then instructed by time and the progress of events, allowed the existing frame of Government to remain untouched, as he unquestionably ought to have done in 1789, till the probable event of the King's malady could have been ascertained. Burke concluded by again alluding to the position of the Queen. "I do not suspect her," observed he, "of ever intentionally acting with impropriety. But situations and temptations may pervert the purest mind, and draw it aside from the path of rectitude. This House, proceeding step after step, has imperceptibly been led on to commit acts which, if they had been proposed at once, would have been rejected by every man of principle. Like Macbeth, who, after having murdered Duncan and Banquo, exclaims,

'I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far, that should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er;'

so they find themselves inclined to proceed, from a want of courage to retrace their steps." No fact can more forcibly prove the degree of unpopularity to which Burke had sunk at this period, than the circumstance of a speech containing matter so impressive, and so much calculated to awaken deep reflections in the minds of his hearers, eliciting no reply. Not a word of answer was made to it, either by Pitt or by any member of Administration.

[*9th February 1789.*] Already the King began to exhibit unequivocal symptoms of returning reason, information of which fact, however guardedly expressed it might be in the medical reports, yet

becoming rapidly diffused throughout society, contributed to sustain the Administration. All coercion of his person having long been withdrawn, as early as the 4th of February his Majesty not only shaved his beard, but part of his head, Willis being present during the operation. His body seemed to sympathise with his mind, and to aid its restoration, an abscess forming in his neck, which suppurated and afforded relief. Ever since the last week of January he had been allowed, as often as the weather permitted, to walk out in the royal gardens of Kew, or of Richmond, accompanied by Dr. Willis, and one of that physician's sons. Though much emaciated in consequence of his confinement, together with the medical treatment that he had undergone, he was capable of great exercise and exertion. Not only the Queen, but the Princess Royal was brought into his apartment of evenings, and remained with him a considerable time. Notwithstanding, however, these apparently favourable indications, as no reliance could yet be placed on their continuance, the parliamentary proceedings advanced, and it was supposed that the lapse of a few days must place his Royal Highness in the Regent's chair. Each side of the House of Commons seemed alike emulous to expedite the progress of the bill by which he was to be invested with that office. But impediments to despatch arose at every step. Divisions even occasionally occurred on particular regulations, in which Ministers were usually supported by a majority fluctuating between fifty and sixty. The clause giving to the Queen a power over part of the privy purse, and locking up the remainder, being carried by fifty-five votes, a most obstinately contested debate followed on the next enactment, which vested in her Majesty the care of the King's person, and the government of the household. Against so vast an



accession of strength in that quarter, the Opposition concentrated all their force.

Lord North demanded of Pitt if he was fully aware of the parliamentary influence which it must confer. "Eighteen peers," continued he, "belong to the household. Do gentlemen consider that eighteen peers voting on one side make the difference of thirty-six on a division?" It was stated, without receiving any contradiction from the Treasury bench, that the number of officers in the royal household amounted to nearly 150, whose places were respectively worth from £60 up to £1800 a year. Powis reprobated the measure, and Marsham maintained that the aggregate number of members of the two Houses holding employments, either in the King's or in the Queen's household, approached nearer sixty than thirty. Sheridan was most pointed in his observations on Pitt's avowed intention to propose a new establishment for the Regent. "How does he dare," asked Sheridan, "to suggest such an idea, after having heard the declaration made from authority, that the Prince desires to have no such establishment created as must occasion fresh burthens on the people? Does he not mean to leave his Royal Highness the power of exercising his own free will upon the point? The Minister must possess a pretty considerable share of presumption, who can take it for granted that his Majesty, whenever he recovers, will be pleased to hear of a new and unnecessary tax having been imposed on his subjects for such a purpose, in addition to their present heavy load."

All these attacks were, nevertheless, conducted with some degree of temper. But Burke, whose impatience to attain possession of office, and whose irritable formation of mind led him to spurn the ordinary restraints of prudence, let loose his indignation on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. "He

demands," exclaimed Burke, "whether we would strip the King of every mark of royalty and transfer them to the Regent? No! Heaven forbid, while the person wearing the crown can lend a grace to those dignities, and derive a lustre from the splendour of his household! But have we forgotten that we are debating relative to a monarch smitten by the hand of Omnipotence? Do we recollect that the Almighty has hurled him from his throne, and plunged him into a condition that may justly excite the pity of the meanest peasant in his dominions!" Expressions so indecorous exciting very general disapprobation, and a loud cry arising from the Ministerial ranks of "Take down his words;" the Marquis of Graham, who was seated near Pitt on the Treasury bench, started up, and declared that "no individual within those walls should dare to assert that the King was hurled from his throne." A scene of great clamour and disorder occurred during some moments, Burke vainly attempting to obtain a patient audience. No sooner had he, however, surmounted the tumult, than, without displaying any embarrassment, he assured the House that he would give them a full opportunity to take down his words. "I was interrupted," continued he, "in the middle of a sentence; and Scripture itself, so mangled, may be rendered blasphemy. But when in our very churches it is asserted that the King is afflicted for our national sins, shall I not be permitted to say that he is struck by the hand of God? What! when we are putting up prayers for the restoration of his intellect, and declaring that it is in punishment of our iniquities the sovereign is deprived of reason, shall I not be allowed to assert that Omnipotence has smitten him? His illness is caused by no act of ours. But ought we, in this his hour of sickness and calamity, to clothe his bed

with purple, to make a mockery of him, to put on his head a crown of thorns, to place a reed in his hand, to array him in royal robes, and to cry ' Hail! King of the British ! ' "

This elegant and ingenious apology, clothed in the language of Scripture, which, with the single exception perhaps of Erskine, Burke alone could have applied with so much felicity and promptitude to the case, produced its full effect. He improved it to inveigh with equal force, but in less intemperate terms, against other features of the bill. " How," demanded he, " will the King be pleased, on his recovery, at finding the patronage of the household transferred from his son and representative to the Queen ? He must be shocked at such an act, unless on the monstrous supposition that his Majesty is a good husband and a bad father. The royal family are, in fact, totally excluded from the present measure, while power of an enormous description is withdrawn from the King's eldest son, and vested in a person not of his Majesty's blood. No one grateful function is left to the Regent which may balance the dreadful attributes of sovereignty. He can make no peers. He can grant neither pensions nor offices. He can exercise no charities. We are about to confer on him a mock crown, a tinsel robe, and a lackered sceptre."

" In former times," continued Burke, " the road to popularity was by upholding the liberties of the people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is born for the age in which he lives. He takes another path. The present bill is contrived to fortify himself when out of office. His Majesty may continue insane for twenty years. And in such case what a state of anarchy are we creating when we thus set up a divided Government ! " Highly coloured as were some parts of this picture, it must be admitted

that there was truth as well as talent in its composition. If the King's recovery had been delayed or had only been doubtful in its nature, a struggle for power would have ensued between Pitt and Fox, between the Regent and the Queen, which was obviated by his prompt resumption of the reins of Government. Sheridan having moved a clause limiting her Majesty's control over the officers of the household "to such as should be deemed necessary for attending about the King's person," Ministers carried the question again by the same majority as the preceding—namely, fifty-five votes.

[10th February 1789.] On the subsequent evening the Minister proceeded to name the eight individuals whom he proposed to form her Majesty's Council. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, together with Lords Thurlow and Kenyon as the two chiefs of the law, naturally occupied the first place. Pitt joined with these dignitaries of the Church and the Bar the four heads of the departments constituting the royal household, namely, the Lord Steward and Lord Chamberlain, the Master of the Horse and the Groom of the Stole. Lord North, who from his anxiety to supply the void occasioned by Fox's absence, took part in every discussion, immediately intimated his intention of moving to insert the names of the Princes of the blood being of full age, his Majesty's sons, as well as those of the Dukes of Gloucester and of Cumberland, his brothers. Other eminent public functionaries were pointed out likewise from different quarters of the House as proper for the same distinction. Sheridan ingeniously treated the Ministerial proposition of excluding the Princes of the blood as unnatural, "because Parliament became thereby the instrument of infusing into her Majesty's mind a suspicion that her sons were not proper persons to advise her, which was an out-

rage on the feelings of nature." The eight names enumerated by Pitt having been severally carried without any division, Lord North then moved, that "the Duke of York be a member of the Council." It was opposed, not only by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but by Addington, then scarcely known as member for Devizes: destined nevertheless within two years to fill the Speaker's chair, and within twelve to succeed Pitt himself at the head of the Treasury and the Exchequer—one of the most extraordinary political transmutations which we have witnessed in our time.

The Minister resisted the Duke of York's nomination on those general principles in conformity to which it had been thought improper to allow the Prince of Wales any concern in the care of his Majesty's person. If therefore the eldest son was excluded, respect to him made it necessary to extend the same rule to the rest of the royal family. Such a respect, Burke observed, operated as a perpetual disqualification, like the respect manifested by the followers of Epicurus for their gods. Lord North reprobated it as "a barbarous principle pushed to a barbarous extent;" while Lord Maitland exclaimed, with his characteristic energy of voice and manner, that "it was not a disrespect but an insult to the King, to the Queen, and to the Prince of Wales." Burke treated the idea as revolting to humanity. "I am myself a father," said he, "so is the noble Lord in the blue ribband. How should we feel, on recovering from a malady such as the present, to find that our sons had been precluded from all share in the custody of our persons! I should regard as a murderer the man who had debarred my son all access to me." Denunciations so violent produced no effect on Pitt, and when a division took place Lord North's motion was rejected, though only by

forty-eight votes. The Duke of Gloucester, when proposed, had against him forty-nine. It was not attempted to divide the House on the Duke of Cumberland. The two brothers had acted indeed a widely different part throughout the whole period of the Sovereign's illness. While the latter, as well as the Duchess of Cumberland, approved themselves devoted partisans of the heir-apparent, and avowedly canvassed for him, the Duke of Gloucester withdrew in a great measure from society. Secluded from politics and pleasures, he absented himself equally from the House of Peers, and seemed deeply to feel the calamity which obscured the throne.

During these parliamentary proceedings Carlton House presented a scene of extraordinary agitation. His Majesty's progressive advance, not only in bodily health, but in the resumption of his mental faculties, was too steady, regular, and apparent, to remain any longer matter either of doubt or of concealment.<sup>1</sup> Yet Warren, though he admitted a considerable degree of composure to have taken place in the King's general deportment and conversation, pertinaciously adhered to his opinion, that no real or permanent amelioration had been operated in his complaint. As Warren stood first in public estimation for medical skill, many persons long accustomed to repose almost unlimited confidence in his professional assertions continued incredulous on the subject. Sir Lucas Pepys, on the other hand, throughout the whole progress of the disorder, had, as I know, entertained a contrary sentiment; and his belief being strengthened by the recent symptoms, he made no secret of his conviction that a speedy

<sup>1</sup> According to the "Report of the Committee appointed to examine the Physicians who have attended on his Majesty," published by Debrett in 1789, the bulletins of the King's health were not sent up to London from Kew by the physicians till the Queen had approved of them.—D.

and complete recovery would ensue. Information of the circumstance reaching the Prince of Wales, he immediately sent for Pepys, who, on his arrival at Carlton House, being ushered into his Royal Highness's presence, there found Dr. Warren. A warm expostulation took place between them, though they lived on terms of mutual regard, approaching to friendship. Each reproached the other with deceiving the Prince by a false representation of facts. Warren maintained that, however flattering appearances might be, they would prove fallacious, and that the alienation of mind was incurable. Pepys as stiffly supported the opposite belief. At length the two physicians parted, leaving the Prince to form his own judgment on their prognostics. But a few days determined the question in Pepys's favour. Warren's political bias unquestionably obscured his usual discernment. All these particulars were related to me by Sir Lucas Pepys himself, within a week after the time when they happened.

[11th February 1789.]—A publication took place at this juncture which, however undeserving of serious commemoration it may seem, yet threw no ordinary degree of ridicule on the Prince's cause and followers. Hume, the most philosophic historian of the last century, though by no means the most impartial, has thought even a song deserving mention among the events of a reign. He says, when enumerating the particulars which conduced in December 1688 to produce the flight of James II., "It may not be unworthy of notice that a merry ballad, called *Lillibullero*, being at this time published in derision of the Papists and the Irish, it was greedily received by the people, and was sung by all ranks of men, even by the King's army, who were strongly seized with the national spirit. This incident both discovered and served to increase the

general discontent of the kingdom." So happened it in some degree on the present occasion. Among the individuals who filled an important place in the interior of Carlton House, in February 1789, was Weltjee. He occupied (not the post held by Bonneau in the court of Charles VII., King of France, respecting which office Voltaire says,

"Il eut l'emploi qui certes n'est pas mince,  
Et qu'à la cour, où tout se peint en beau,  
Nous appellons être l'ami du prince ;"

but) the charge of comptroller of the kitchen and cellars of that royal residence ; an employment that demanded great gastronomic talents. Weltjee was a German of no ordinary bodily dimensions, not distinguished by the humility of his deportment or manners, and fully impressed with the importance of his post. Though he had resided some years in England, he spoke no language except a barbarous Anglo-Westphalian jargon, which generally provoked laughter. Nor was his English orthography more correct than his enunciation. But amidst his attention to the tastes of his Royal Highness, Weltjee had not been oblivious of his own personal interests.

On the 7th of February died Sir Thomas Halifax, a city knight, one of the representatives for the borough of Aylesbury. It was imagined that Colonel Gerard Lake, who then filled the situation about the Prince of first equerry and commissioner of the stables, and whose distinguished military services in India have since raised him to the rank of a British viscount, would have started for the vacancy. I believe, in point of fact, he did offer himself, but without success ; though at the general election in 1790 he was chosen one of the members for Aylesbury.



A very few days after Halifax's decease, a printed letter, addressed to the freeholders of that borough, signed "W. Velshie," was circulated at the west end of the town. Its contents could not be perused by the most splenetic man with a grave countenance. I copy the original as it now lies on my table :—

"To de Gendelmen, de Abbès, and de Freholders  
of de Comtè of Ailsbri.

"My frind Gerri Lake havin offurd his sarvis's, to reprepresent you in parliailiamment, I presum to tak de friddom to recummind um to you, bein my frind, and grate frind of my master de Prince. He is ver clever gendelmen, and kno de horse ver vell, how to bi for de Prince, and how to sel for himselv. But if you tink him two poor, and send him to de divl, I beg to offer miselv on his intrist, havin got plenti of munny in de honorable stasion I holds undur de Prince. I am naturalise Inglisman and Wig, and was introduce to de Wig Club by Lord Stormant and Jak Payne. Mi public sentimints are dat I vil give you ver good dinnurs and plenti of munni, if you vil lect me your representatative. My frinds and connuxions are de Duk of Qinsbri, Lord Lodian, Lord Luffbro, Lord Malmsbri, Lord Clurmunt, Lord Cartrit, Sheridan, Gerri Lake, Jak Payne, Geo. Hangre, Burke, Singel Spict Hambledon, Eglington, Master Lee, Trevis de Jew, yong Gray, all de Convays, Harri Standup, Tarletun, and Tom Stepni. My principles are God dam de King and de Quin, de Pitt, and de Rustricsuns; and God bles de Prince and all his broders, and de Duk de Cumberland. I say agen and agen dat de Prince be our lawful suvring, and not his fader.

"I am, gendelmen,

"Your frind and sarvant,

"W. VELSHIE."

The universally reputed author of this ludicrous production was the present Earl Onslow, then eldest son of Lord Onslow, commonly called in society Tom Onslow.<sup>1</sup> He represented at the time the borough of Guildford. In his person he was low, rather indeed beneath the middle stature, and destitute of any elegance or grace, most fluent in discourse, his words and ideas always seeming to press for utterance. His education had corresponded with his birth; the great compositions of antiquity were familiar to him, and he possessed an infinity of wit, if unfortunately it had not too frequently degenerated into buffoonery. Even then he was often classical, though not always decorous. Yet her Majesty, and the Princesses her daughters, delighted in his society, seeming to enjoy his most eccentric flights of humour, fancy, and mimicry. They were peculiar to himself, baffling all attempt at description. In order to spare the eye, though he might sometimes wound the ear, he usually performed them behind a screen. His predominant passion was driving four-in-hand.<sup>2</sup> He passed the whole day in his phaeton, and sacrificed every object to the gratification of that "ignoble ambition," as he himself called it when speaking to me on the subject. Nevertheless, while holding the reins and exercising the whip in Piccadilly, his mind was not inactive. If by accident we met he would sometimes stop, descend from the phaeton, and entreat me to listen to a lampoon, or a couplet which he had just composed: he had, in fact, a poetic vein, though the stream was shallow. Voluble

<sup>1</sup> He succeeded his father, the first Earl, in 1814, and died in 1827, in his seventy-third year.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> "What can Tommy Onslow do?"

'Why, drive a chaise and two;'

'Can little Tommy do no more?'

'Yes, drive a coach and four.'—ED.

as he appeared to be in conversation, and abounding with ideas, he possessed no political talent; and I believe he never made an attempt to rise in either House of Parliament, where the name of Onslow would have secured him a favourable hearing, at least in one House. On himself, not less than on his acquaintance, he exercised his satire, sparing neither his own defects of mind nor of person. I have already observed that he scarcely attained to middle height. Driving on a certain day to the Custom House in his phaeton, while remaining on the quays a crane, which was employed in landing goods, in swinging round, caught his carriage, and had nearly lifted it from the ground, driver, horses, and all. Onslow, who was an expert coachman, disengaged himself after some time, not without difficulty, from his perilous situation. "Now," exclaimed he, "I can believe in the accounts transmitted to us of the battle between the pigmies and the cranes."

Among the eminent individuals enumerated in "Weltjee's Address to the Electors of Aylesbury," many have been already mentioned in the course of these Memoirs. Indeed, with the exception of three—namely, the Earl of Eglinton, Mr. Lee, and Travis,<sup>1</sup>—I personally knew, in a greater or less degree, all the others. I have elsewhere spoken of the late Admiral Payne, one of the most honest, honourable, and attached servants of the Prince of Wales. Lord Carteret<sup>2</sup> still survives in 1821, at a very advanced age. Having been raised to the

<sup>1</sup> Raikes, in his *Journal* (Vol. ii. 379), after describing the appearance of the Prince of Wales at Brighton races, concludes the roll of the Prince's suite, with, "And oh, extraordinary anomaly! the little old Jew, Travis, who, like the dwarf of old, followed in the train of royalty."—D.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Frederick Thynne Carteret, Baron Carteret, son of the second Viscount Weymouth, and brother of the first Marquis of Bath."—ED.

peerage by Pitt in 1784, and holding at the time of his Majesty's malady the office of joint Postmaster-General, his defection in joining the Prince's party excited much surprise, while it cost him his place. The Honourable George Hanger, now become an Irish baron in his old age by the successive decease of his two brothers, the Lords Coleraine,<sup>1</sup> might rather be considered as a humble retainer of Carlton House than justly numbered among the friends of the heir-apparent. Poor even to a degree of destitution, without profession or regular employment, subsisting from day to day by expedients, some of them not the most reputable, he was regarded as a sort of outcast from decent society. Yet he did not altogether want a degree of eccentric talent. Like myself, he is an author, having published, nearly twenty years ago, his "Life, Adventures, and Opinions," a work in which, together with much absurdity, may be found some curious facts and anecdotes of his own time. Sir Thomas Stepney, who has succeeded to the title, but without the estate, of his elder brother, and my friend, the late Sir John, belonged to the Duke of York, not to the Prince of Wales. In the Duke's family Stepney has held for a quarter of a century, and still continues at the present hour to fill, the post of groom of the bedchamber. Tarleton,<sup>2</sup> distinguished in his youth, on the other side of the Atlantic, as a brave and enterprising partisan during the course of the American war, the Trenck of our time, has been since known in Parliament, through many sessions, as member for Liverpool.

Notwithstanding the rapidity with which the Regency Bill had advanced through the House of Commons, yet one great, delicate, and most impor-

<sup>1</sup> This title became extinct in 1824.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> General Sir Banastre Tarleton, Bart., K.C.B., died 1833.—ED.

tant provision still remained for regulation—I mean the mode and form by which his Majesty should be enabled, on his mental recovery, to resume the monarchical power. It formed a point of extraordinary difficulty for legislation. Pitt, with his usual masterly compression of ideas, stated his proposition to the House, enabling the Queen, whenever she and five of her Council should consider the King to be restored to sanity of mind, immediately to convoke the Privy Council, as far as any number not less than nine. If six of the latter body should coincide in opinion that his Majesty's disorder no longer existed, they were authorised and bound to countersign the proclamation informing the public of his recovery. A copy of this instrument was ordered to be immediately transmitted to the Lord Mayor of London, and to be printed in the "Gazette," Parliament being totally precluded from exercising any interference or participation throughout the whole transaction. Such was the Minister's plan, which he justified by strong, plausible, and solid reasons. "The King possesses," said Pitt, "an undoubted right to resume the personal exercise of the royal authority as soon as he has recovered his reason. That fact must be notified through some ostensible channel. Privy counsellors, responsible for their advice, would form the proper mode of communicating the event to the country, which notification would instantly terminate the Regency. The Queen and her Council having stated it to the President of the Council, then, on the King's requisition under his sign-manual, the Privy Council being assembled, are bound to countersign the royal proclamation calling on Parliament to meet without delay. In consequence of such precautions, I conceive it to be impossible that a resumption can take place under doubtful or equivocal circumstances."

Wise, able, and commensurate with the evil, as this measure may perhaps appear to posterity, it excited the general unqualified indignation of the chiefs of Opposition. Powis stigmatised it by the epithets of "incongruous, unprecedented, and unconstitutional; an attempt to supersede the rights of Parliament, transferring them to a hackneyed and garbled junto." Marsham reiterated all these accusations. Francis observed how easy it was to prove beyond dispute the existence of insanity, but how difficult to demonstrate the fact of a real and complete recovery. "Yet Parliament," continued he, "having thought it indispensable to establish the King's incapacity to the satisfaction of the whole country, was now called on to refer the question of his resumption to an inferior tribunal." Sheridan pointing these remarks against the Minister with his accustomed talent, Dundas came forward to Pitt's support. "The proposition," said he, "submitted to the House, is for enabling the King, on his recovery, to meet his Parliament in his own right as sovereign. On the contrary, the alternative held out would humiliate him to the character of a suppliant for his throne, while he must witness his authority exercised by a Regent. But there still remains an additional check, and which I by no means regard as feeble in its operation. It is the pause allowed to his Majesty, during which he may exercise his philosophy and his religion, by revolving deeply his situation, previous to issuing the proclamation which will say to his people, I am again your King. Can it be suffered, that when he is recovered, the Regent appointed to exercise his functions shall come down to Parliament with the pomp of royalty, while the sovereign is compelled to remain a spectator of the show from the windows of Buckingham House? I believe this assembly

and the country will equally revolt at such a proposition."

It was not till towards the close of the debate that Burke attempted to take part in the discussion; nor, such was his unpopularity, did he succeed without considerable difficulty. "We have been asked," observed he, "from the Treasury bench, whether we would wish to see the King a suppliant to Parliament for his throne? I reply, Yes; I consider Parliament as the proper judge of kings, and it is necessary that they should be amenable to it. But I do not wish him to be a suppliant to his own menial servants who eat his bread and receive his wages."—"The first indispensable preliminary to his Majesty's resumption of the royal authority, is that the sanity should not be doubtful. It would form matter of awful responsibility, to bring forward the person of a monarch who might become the tool of a faction. The disorder with which he is visited resembles a vast sea that has rolled in, and then at a low tide has rolled back, leaving a bold and barren shore. I have visited the dreadful abodes in which are confined these unfortunate beings. An author of no ordinary authority, when describing the uncertainty of the symptoms that indicate sanity, declares that many of the patients who had remained a month after their apparent recovery, before they were pronounced free from all complaint, had relapsed on the very last day previous to their intended liberation. The consequences were of the most disastrous kind. Some of these wretched individuals, after an assumed restoration of reason, have proceeded to acts of sanguinary violence." Strong marks of disapprobation, with cries of "Order," issuing from the Ministerial benches at this part of his speech, "I wish, Mr. Speaker," resumed Burke, "to observe the utmost delicacy; but delicacy is only a subsidiary virtue,

and ought always to be subordinate to truth, where the latter is of paramount importance. Towards the other sex we cannot preserve too much delicacy, yet are there numerous occasions in which it must be sacrificed. Child-birth, more especially where a kingdom is at stake; divorce bills, trials for rapes, proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts;—on all these, a total disregard is necessarily exhibited for delicacy. I readily admit that the King's resumption of power, if his cure prove effectual and permanent, will be a most auspicious event; but its effects must be proportionably dreadful should a sudden relapse take place."

I have attempted to state with precision the purport of Burke's observations, as, independent of the curious nature of the subject, it may probably form the last occasion that I shall have to mention that illustrious person in the course of these Memoirs. After the debate of the 11th of February, Burke retired from the House of Commons, or took no part in the discussions that arose there during a considerable time. Finding that all his opposition only produced great odium to himself, while the King, contrary to Dr. Warren's predictions, advanced rapidly to the complete resumption of his mental powers, Burke abandoned a theatre on which he could no longer perform a part useful to his friends or to the common cause. In truth he had incurred, by his line of conduct, severe but perhaps unjust censure; for it is impossible to deny that a most striking analogy exists between the two cases of Charles VI. and of George III., as Burke more than once asserted, though the admirable provisions of the British Constitution preserved us from experiencing the calamities by which France was desolated under that unhappy reign. Nor did Burke by any means exaggerate the misfortune of a partial restoration



of reason if it had taken place in 1789, as actually happened twenty-two years later in the spring of 1811. George III. during successive weeks then seemed to have nearly or fully recovered his faculties, and he displayed in his conversations with the Ministers the utmost anxiety as well as impatience to resume his sceptre. What a collision might—nay, must have arisen between Pitt and Fox if the King, at the time of which I now treat, had only enjoyed gleams and intervals of sanity! But other circumstances contributed to silence Burke. On the 11th of February his Majesty's disorder had evidently subsided, and Warren himself, who remained so long incredulous, at length signed upon that day a most favourable report. Such progress, indeed, had he made towards a perfect cure, that on the morning of the very day in question, Pitt had been allowed for the first time to visit the Sovereign since the beginning of his malady. He went down alone to Kew, was introduced by Dr. Willis, remained with his Majesty about fifteen minutes, conversed with him on ordinary topics, of course avoiding political subjects, and found him collected on every point.

Before I take leave of Burke, whose name fills so conspicuous a place in the annals of George III. during more than thirty years, let us cast a farewell glance on him at this period of his life. Never throughout his splendid parliamentary career—and splendid it unquestionably was, though passed almost wholly on the Opposition bench—had he sunk so low in popular estimation as in 1789! He no longer contended against a King and a Minister engaged in a civil war which produced annually new disgraces and defeats. On the other hand, Burke felt himself declining in years and in health. His circumstances were very embarrassed; his son whom he fondly cherished was destitute of any provision or fortune,

and his own temper had become sharpened by long adversity, while his sanguine expectations of filling the Pay-office a third time under the approaching Regency had become suddenly overclouded. Old age impended with its infirmities and diseases. From this seemingly hopeless situation he was soon extricated by the French Revolution, of which event and its consequences to Europe he early took a very different view and formed a very different estimate from Fox.

His speeches and literary productions in opposition to the inroads of popular violence, anarchy, and subversion in France dissolving the ties which had so long united him with Fox, naturally led him over to Pitt. I was present in the House of Commons on that evening when Burke, after producing from under his coat the revolutionary dagger, and renouncing all further connection with his old political friends, crossed to the Treasury bench, where he squeezed himself in between Dundas and Pitt. It formed the most interesting and affecting scene that I witnessed during the time that I remained in Parliament; Fox weeping throughout the whole transaction, his emotions, as often as he rose to speak, impeding his utterance. Burke, on the contrary, who shifted his place more than once before he finally passed over to the Government side of the House, never shed a tear nor even manifested any sentiment of concern. Abhorrence of the revolutionary doctrines, as he esteemed them, which Fox had professed on different occasions, seemed to have steeled Burke's breast against all impressions or recollections of former times. Indeed, his whole deportment resembled the wild and troubled movements of a man disordered in mind rather than the sober, reflective determination of a statesman. So great an accession of moral strength to Administration was justly appreciated by

the Sovereign and by the Minister. Two pensions, amounting together to £3600 a year, were bestowed on him, each for three lives, as his remuneration. I believe he obtained for them by sale near £36,000. Honours and distinctions followed. Not, indeed, titles or decorations, but the most flattering testimonies of notice and of royal favour. George III. accompanied him from one end to the other of Windsor Terrace, covering with attentions and expressions of regard the champion of order, monarchy, and good government. Thus secured by the bounty of the Crown from pecuniary difficulties, did that distinguished individual shortly afterwards finish his days!

[11th—13th February 1789.] No attempt to answer Burke was made by any member of Administration; but some coarse personal jests or sarcasms on his visits to the receptacles for insane patients, to which he had alluded in his speech, were thrown out by Sir Richard Hill from the Treasury bench. Sheridan, after observing that as the bill was drawn up, the King's recovery would not be notified to Parliament in any shape, even though the two Houses should be actually assembled when it took place, moved an amendment to Pitt's proposition. Its object was to compel the Privy Council to take care that the instrument announcing his Majesty's recovery should be submitted to Parliament previous to its transmission to the Lord Mayor, or its insertion in the "Gazette." On a division, Government negatived it by a majority of sixty-eight, the respective numbers being 181 and 113. It formed the last effort of Opposition against the bill, which was read a third time on that night.

Next day Pulteney moved a clause for limiting to the term of three years the provision which imposed restrictions on the Regent's power of creating peers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who well appre-

ciated the value of Pulteney's support, not only concurred with him in sentiment, but reiterated, with testimonies of high approbation, all Pulteney's opinions relative to the duration of the restrictions. "I thank Heaven, however," added he, "that I have every day stronger reason to believe his Majesty's illness will not be protracted to any distant period!" In fact, on that very morning the report of his physicians had pronounced him to be in "a progressive state of amendment." Sheridan moved that instead of three years, the words "one year" should be inserted in the blank; but, knowing the inutility of dividing the House, he allowed the clause to be filled up with the former term. The bill then passed; and on the 13th of February, Pitt, attended by many of his friends, carried it up to the bar of the House of Lords.

[13th—18th February 1789.] Fox returned at this time from Bath, as much apparently amended in his health as he was sunk in his expectations of again entering the Cabinet. Little more than three weeks earlier, when he left London, the King, according to appearances, seemed to be in an almost hopeless state of lunacy.<sup>1</sup> Before the middle of February his prompt and complete restoration to sanity of mind was universally, as well as confidently, anticipated. How often must Fox have deplored his recall from Italy at a moment when he already touched the land of arts, and was preparing to visit the three gems of Europe—gems which he was never again permitted to see. His whole residence in London had been a "phantasma," injurious to his health, and terminating in disappointment.

Already various individuals, either of high rank,

<sup>1</sup> Fox, writing to Fitzpatrick on the 15th December 1788, says, "I think it certain that in about a fortnight we shall come in. . . . The King himself (notwithstanding the reports you may possibly hear, is certainly worse, and perfectly mad."—D.

or holding offices of trust, or distinguished by the King's personal favour, were admitted to see and converse with him. Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, a dull, but a worthy and respectable prelate, was among the first; and on the following day, Pitt, together with the new Speaker of the House of Commons, had an interview of some length with his Majesty. Even the Earl of Chesterfield and the Duke of Richmond were allowed to wait on him; but it was not thought proper to introduce into his presence the Prince of Wales or the Duke of York.

With the Chancellor he held long and repeated conversations, Willis being usually, but not invariably, present on these occasions, when only topics of ordinary discourse were agitated. With the Queen and his daughters he passed much time. His appetite, sleep, and memory all returned; while his pulse, which had risen to 120 pulsations in a minute during the severe accesses of his disorder, fell gradually to its usual standard. He was not left in ignorance that Warren, throughout his whole distemper, had augured ill of his recovery; and that, when the other medical attendants perceived amendment, Warren either did not, or would not, coincide in opinion with them. As early as the 11th of February, when that physician arrived at Kew and entered his apartment, the King held out his arm, adding, "Feel my pulse, Dr. Warren. How does it beat? And how many strokes did it beat three days ago? I think there is some amendment. Is there not?" Warren admitted it, and fully confirmed his conviction of the fact by the "bulletin" which he signed on that day; but it was not until the 17th of the month that he certified under his hand the King's being "in a state of convalescence."

Meanwhile the House of Peers proceeded in the Regency Bill with as much despatch as if the malady

had not manifested any symptoms of abatement; but the interest which, under opposite circumstances, would have attended their deliberations, became much diminished in consequence of the recent change that had taken place at Kew. No debate of importance arose in the early stages of the measure till the 18th, when Lord Rawdon, after expatiating with force relative to the clauses which conferred on the Queen a control over the royal household, moved the limitation of her Majesty's authority to such part of the establishment "as should be deemed necessary to attend on the King during his illness." Lord Stormont on this occasion exhibited his accustomed powers of argument and eloquence. "The Ministers," said he, "when they institute a feeble Government, know not the extent or magnitude of the evils that they originate. I fear not, my Lords, an open, bold ambition. But I dread that dark and secret ambition, which, working under ground and undermining all opposed to it, may cripple the power which it dares not avowedly combat in open day. The patronage of the household extends over offices exceeding £100,000 a year in value. I have ever understood that the King is the fountain of office, as of honour. This bill makes the Queen the fountain of office. But the present Administration subvert every barrier of the constitution."

"It has been observed," continued Lord Stormont, "that the Queen can have no political views. I well know how much she is entitled to veneration. But her advisers, who possess power without responsibility, may misguide her. Artifice and cabal will find their way into her presence, for I know of no quality in the air of Kew which has power to expel or to remove the vermin that invariably infest courts."

Lord Hawkesbury, who might possibly find some

of the sentiments in this speech calculated to afford him subject of reflection, rose in reply. So did Lord Sydney, who denied that the operation of the bill would weaken the new Government. "Let us," exclaimed he, "consider who the Regent is. A Prince of Wales of high character, of captivating manners, greatly beloved, and in the flower of youth. The restrictions imposed, it is well known, are only provided for the period of his Majesty's incapacity. Do we recollect the present situation of the Sovereign? He has been already declared convalescent in a report signed by Dr. Warren; and his testimony, I presume, will not be called in question." A division taking place, Lord Rawdon's amendment was rejected by twenty-three votes, the respective numbers being eighty-nine to sixty-six; and a warm discussion then arose on the question of adjournment. Ministers, anxious to stop further proceedings, at a moment when the King might again be speedily brought forward in his regal capacity, proposed to "report progress;" but the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Stormont, and various other peers, opposed it with the utmost vehemence. When the "Irish propositions," said they, "were discussed within these walls, we continued here till two in the morning. And are we now, at half-past eight, to be told of the lateness of the hour? No man who considers the deep importance and urgency of the present business can deny that it calls for despatch. If, therefore, Ministers postpone it, they must be responsible to their country for the consequences." Notwithstanding their reclamations, an adjournment finally took place.

[19th February 1789.] On the following day, it having been determined in Cabinet to arrest the further progress of the Regency Bill in the Upper House, the Chancellor took his seat on the wool-

sack. Then rising before the order could be read for renewing the debate of the preceding evening, he observed that since his Majesty had been pronounced by his physicians in a state of convalescence, the accounts of his progressive improvement had almost hourly received confirmation. "The recent intelligence from Kew," continued Lord Thurlow, "is so favourable, that I conceive every individual present will coincide with me in thinking it would be indecent to continue the proceedings in which we are engaged, when the principle of the bill itself may probably be completely done away." Having then congratulated the audience and the country on the auspicious opening prospect, he submitted to the Peers the propriety of an adjournment until the ensuing Tuesday, the 24th of the month. No opposition whatever was experienced, and only two individuals expressed any opinion on the occasion. The first was Lord Stormont. After protesting that the communication just made gave him the liveliest joy, "Although Regencies," added he, "are expedients required by necessity under peculiar exigencies, yet every man must feel how great is the calamity of their existence. With respect to the present Regency Bill, I consider it as an aggravation of our national misfortunes. I rejoice therefore, personally, if I should be delivered from the severe duty which the urgent nature of the case, and that motive alone, could have induced me to undertake. Yet, even under the embarrassing restrictions imposed, I am convinced that the Prince of Wales would have exhibited an earnest of that wisdom and exertion which may be expected from him when in the course of nature he shall ascend the throne. My eyes, it is reasonable to suppose, will be closed long before that day arrives; but there are lords now present who may live to witness it. They, I



have no doubt, will experience the benefit, and will acknowledge the truth, of my prediction." We must candidly admit that during eight or nine years the Regent's administration did not in any degree disgrace Lord Stormont's augury. But what sentence will posterity pass upon the King for his treatment of the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick, from the instant of his ascending the throne? The second and last person who addressed the House was the Duke of York. Having declared the high satisfaction which he felt at the favourable account given, and his perfect concurrence with the motion for adjournment, he then subjoined, "I should have derived the greatest pleasure from making the same communication, if I had been enabled to do it from any authentic information. Impressed with the exhilarating reports circulated, I esteemed it my duty yesterday to request admission to his Majesty's presence. From reasons which might be considered as justifiable, I was denied that satisfaction. I cannot have had any communication with my royal brother on a subject so unexpectedly agitated; but the knowledge which I possess of his sentiments enables me to assert that his gratification at this auspicious intelligence will be, if possible, even higher than my own. It must liberate him from the embarrassments in which he would otherwise have been placed, and which no motive could have impelled or induced him to encounter, except a strong sense of his duty to the country." When the House of Commons met on the day ensuing, Pitt, without assigning the slightest reason for his conduct, or giving any explanation whatever, instantly moved an adjournment to the 24th of February, which Vyner, affecting surprise at so singular a proceeding, when no part of the public business was yet brought forward, added, "I can, nevertheless, imagine the cause; and if I

am well founded in my conjecture, it is a most joyous cause to this House, as well as to the kingdom. Yet I cannot help wishing that we might enjoy the gratification of hearing it stated from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to be enabled to communicate it with confidence to our constituents." Almost any other Minister than Pitt would have made some reply, if not disclosure, in compliance with Vyner's invitation ; but he, on the contrary, entrenching himself in silence, the question of adjournment was put, and carried without one dissentient voice.

[*24th February 1789.*] Nor was he more communicative when the House met again, though before that day the King had nearly emancipated himself from all medical attendance. The Chancellor, however little distinguished by the general suavity of his manners or temper, acted very differently towards the peers. He thought it proper to premise, before he moved for an adjournment to the 2d of the ensuing month, that every information received from Kew confirmed the probability of his Majesty's speedy and complete recovery. Amidst the silence which followed, the Duke of Norfolk, rising, observed that notwithstanding the want of any regular evidence to contradict the testimony of the physicians who had been formally examined, yet the Chancellor enjoying the honour of being personally admitted into the royal presence, his statement carried with it irresistible authority. "Nevertheless," continued the Duke, "I could wish to learn what is the present aspect of the King's health, what steps are intended to be pursued after the proposed period of adjournment if the sovereign, continuing to advance in progressive amendment, shall nevertheless be then unable to resume his regular functions. Lastly, will another examination

of the physicians take place?" To the first of these inquiries the Chancellor gave a satisfactory reply. "As far," answered he, "as my judgment enables me to form an opinion, the posture of his Majesty's mind appears to be clear and distinct. During the recent interviews which I have had with him in obedience to his commands I have remained in his presence at one time for an hour and a quarter. On this very day I passed a full hour with him. Throughout both these audiences I found his intelligence perfectly sound, insomuch that I consider him to be capable of conversing on any subject." Evading the Duke's subsequent questions, "Whatever measures might be hereafter proposed," he said, "must be founded on the state of his Majesty's health, and could not therefore as yet be accurately stated." An adjournment followed.

[24th—28th February 1789.] While all public business was thus suspended, the King continued to make the most rapid and uninterrupted advances to perfect recovery. As early as the 25th of the month Warren had signed a report declaring that "he appeared to be free from complaint," and two days afterwards orders were issued to discontinue the "bulletins." His Majesty even resumed his accustomed intercourse with Pitt by letters, manifesting in them, as well as in every other act, a composed mind. He might indeed be said to have recommenced the exercise of his regal functions, as on the last day of February he signed a commission filled up at the Treasury, and transmitted to Kew for that purpose. Perhaps in such a proceeding there was something informal, if not illegal, no parliamentary proof existing of his restoration to sanity since the last examination of the physicians. But, as no legislative act had received the royal sanction declaring him suspended from the exercise of the

sovereign authority, Ministers, conscious of the general wishes of the nation, ventured to pass the strict limits of law. Numerous individuals distinguished by the King's regard or partiality, among whom were Lord Hawksbury, Sir Joseph Banks, and West, the celebrated painter, obtained access to him ; but he did not as yet think proper to admit into his presence either the Prince of Wales or Duke of York.

A circumstance which took place likewise at this time tended still more to widen the breach. The two Irish Houses of Parliament having, in opposition to all the efforts of the Lord-Lieutenant, and certainly with more precipitation than wisdom, addressed the Prince of Wales to take on him the Regency of that kingdom during the King's malady, without restrictions, sent over a deputation to London for the purpose of announcing it to His Royal Highness. At their head were placed the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Charlemont, who arrived in the English capital on the 25th of February, the very day when his Majesty was declared to be "free from complaint." On the 27th, precisely as the medical reports were suppressed on account of the King's complete recovery, these delegates presented the address of the Irish Parliament to His Royal Highness at Carlton House. He made them a grateful and appropriate answer. But it was thought that the members of the deputation would have acted more judiciously if, on finding the King recovered, they had written to their constituents at Dublin demanding new instructions. The Duke of York entertained them at his residence in Whitehall on the day of presenting the address. This dinner was followed by a superb banquet given at Carlton House, where not only the Dukes of York and of Cumberland assisted, but at which were likewise present with the principal Opposition peers,

Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Francis, Courtenay, and Lord John Townshend, then one of the members for Westminster. Fox had previously made his appearance in the House of Commons. After passing a few weeks very joyously and convivially in the metropolis, the Irish delegates returned home. If they had arrived a month earlier their appearance and mission would have produced no ordinary effect; but coming after the King's recovery, and nevertheless persisting to prosecute the original purpose for which they were sent, so strange a mode of proceeding excited many animadversions not unaccompanied with ridicule.

As soon as the King resumed his ordinary occupations, he passed a great part of his time in the perusal of the recent debates that had arisen in both Houses. The divisions, accompanied with the printed lists of the members who respectively voted upon each side, formed likewise an interesting subject of his attention. I know that after maturely reviewing them he said, "The conduct of two individuals in the House of Commons affects me with much surprise; the one that he should have supported me, the other that he deserted me. I mean Mr. Dundas in the first, and Sir Charles Gould in the second instance." However interested or relaxed Dundas's political principles might be supposed, yet the superiority of his judgment kept him firm to Pitt.<sup>1</sup> From the opposite party he could not hope for employment. He consulted, therefore, his interest and his ambition not less than his honour and his character in standing or falling with his friend the Minister. Sir Charles Gould found himself in a different predicament. He was then only a knight,

<sup>1</sup> "It is not generally known that at the period of Lord Melville's trial a coolness almost approaching to estrangement had arisen between that Minister and Mr. Pitt."—*Edinburgh Review*, vol. lxvii. p. 175.

having received the distinction in 1779, as the representative of Admiral Sir Edward Hughes, when that naval officer was decorated with the order of the Bath. Mr. Gould being bred to the law, at an early period of life made proposals to Mr. Morgan of Ruperra, in the county of Glamorgan, for the hand of one of his daughters. "I have," answered he, "two girls. One is handsome, the other not so well endowed by nature. In order to repair that deficiency I mean to give her £1500 as a marriage portion. To her sister I shall only give £1000. Which of them would you wish to have?" "Allow me to inquire," replied Gould, "which is the eldest?" "The plain girl," rejoined he. "Then, if you please, sir," said Gould, "I'll have her."

The marriage was accomplished, the bride having at the time three brothers, two of whom I personally knew in Parliament. They nevertheless all died without leaving issue, and Gould, in right of his wife, inherited the immense estates situate at Tredegar, at Ruperra, and in other parts of South Wales, which at this hour exceed £40,000 per annum. Not long after the King's accession in 1762, Gould had been made Judge Advocate General of the Forces, a post which he held nearly four-and-forty years. His inclinations, his principles, and his official employment all impelled him to support Administration. But he was brought into the House of Commons as member for the county of Brecon by the Morgan interest, and Pitt having offended that family in order to oblige the Duke of Beaufort, Gould, who beheld himself the probable eventual heir to their vast property, quitted the Minister on some questions to follow his brother-in-law into Opposition. Such was the secret history of his defection, at which the King expressed so much astonishment. Gould, when he obtained the Morgan estates, assumed at the same time their

name, both of which have descended to his son. But the father never could succeed in attaining the grand object of his ambition—a British peerage. Pitt created him, indeed, a baronet in 1792, and subsequently raised him to a place in the Privy Council. He supplicated, implored, offered to resign his employment of Judge Advocate General, and exerted during many successive years every effort in order to conciliate the Minister. Pitt remained, however, inflexible, and Sir Charles died a commoner in 1806, as his son continues in 1820.<sup>1</sup>

[*1st—9th March 1789.*] Both Houses still adjourning from time to time in order to allow a sufficient interval for the confirmation of his Majesty's recovery, Pitt, on the 2d of March, at length briefly adverted to the fact, as forming a motive to postpone during a few days the resumption of public business. The Prince of Wales and Duke of York were finally permitted to wait on the King; but their reception, as might be expected, was cold, grave, and formal, admitting no explanations whatever of their past conduct. Four pages of the backstairs, two of whom were Germans, the other two English, suspected of divulging or transmitting information to Carlton House during the critical periods of the King's malady, received their dismissal. So did the Marquis of Lothian, as colonel of the first regiment of Lifeguards, and the Duke of Queensberry, as one of the lords of the bedchamber. Yet even in these acts his Majesty manifested a mind exempt from, and superior to, any vindictive sentiment. The Duke of Queensberry's large property in England, as well as in Scotland, rendered him indifferent to the loss of his place in a pecuniary point of view; but Lord Lothian could ill afford such a defalcation from his income. Aware of the

<sup>1</sup> His grandson was created Lord Tredegar in 1859.—Ed.

circumstance, the King, while he removed the marquis from a situation near his own person, nevertheless bestowed on him another regiment; compensating the difference between it and the former by an annual allowance out of the privy purse. General Burgoyne and Fox did not less inveigh with the utmost acrimony against the treatment of Lord Lothian, as a shameless act of ministerial vengeance and oppression. Taking advantage of the Army Estimates being moved in the House of Commons some few days afterwards, Fox exclaimed, "The language of Ministers to military officers evidently is, 'You may vote against Government, you may oppose the interests of the King, and you may do both without incurring punishment; but you shall not support the interests of the Prince of Wales.'" No word was uttered by Pitt in reply.

If the fact relative to the Marquis of Lothian strongly proves the placability of George III.'s temper, the particulars that I am about to recount will equally attest the enlargement and serenity of his mind. During the first days of March, being at Kew, accompanied only by one of his equerries, while walking through the apartments of the palace, the astonished eyes of the equerry were involuntarily arrested by a strait waistcoat that lay on a chair. Hastily averting his view from an object which recalled images so painful, he endeavoured to conceal his embarrassment. But the King, who perceived it, and who well knew the cause, turning to him, said, "You need not be afraid to look at it. Perhaps it is the best friend I ever had in my life." The gentleman in question was Mr. Robert Greville, brother to the late Earl of Warwick, who related it to Sir John Macpherson. Nearly at the same time, before the King quitted Kew to remove to Windsor, he received information that a poorhouse, or hospital,



was constructing at Richmond. Without previously giving notice of his design, attended only by Major Price, his equerry in waiting, he entered the building, and inspected every part of it; not omitting the rooms destined for the reception of lunatics, which he examined with minute and particular attention. Having gratified his curiosity, he left the hospital; observing that he derived great pleasure from seeing so comfortable an asylum, and such excellent accommodations, provided for persons labouring under the misfortune of insanity. After his complete recovery, on returning to Windsor, the windows of his apartments at the lodge, which had been nailed down during the first paroxysms of his malady in order to guard against any sudden act of frenzy,—by a censurable negligence of the domestics still remained in the same state. The King, not aware of the circumstance, attempted to throw up one of the windows. Finding it fastened, the cause was explained to him. He expressed neither emotion nor irritation on the occasion.

[*10th March 1789.*] At length, after repeated adjournments, the two Houses met for the despatch of business. The speech, which the Chancellor pronounced in his Majesty's name, was evidently drawn up in terms calculated to obviate opposition, and, if possible, to produce unanimity. In it the Sovereign returned "his warmest acknowledgments for the proofs of affectionate attachment exhibited to his person, the zealous concern shown for the honour and interests of his crown, together with the security and good government of his dominions." No eulogiums, either on Ministers or on their late measures, were introduced. Earl Gower, eldest son of the Marquis of Stafford, and who not long afterwards succeeded the Duke of Dorset as ambassador at the court of France, moved the address to the throne in

the Lower House. He performed it with brevity, avoiding cautiously every topic likely to excite a difference of sentiment. Mr. Yorke, now Earl of Hardwicke, who seconded the motion, did not think it requisite to exert equal circumspection. He ventured to observe that "the House might find subject of congratulation in having proceeded with more caution than expedition;" adding, that "it must be to them a source of exultation to perceive that his Majesty was able, on resuming the duties of his office, not only to approve, but likewise to applaud their proceedings." These expressions, which implied the strongest approbation of Pitt and his colleagues, did not escape Fox's animadversion, though he declared that they should not prevent him from concurring in a unanimous vote.

"I do not believe, however," continued Fox, "that the King intended to express any such opinion of the late Parliamentary proceedings as has been intimated; because the speech is always considered, not as his, but as the Minister's speech. It is therefore altogether improbable that he would make it the vehicle of applauding his own measures. I entertain likewise too high an opinion of his Majesty's regard for justice, to suppose him capable of deciding between two parties without previously hearing both, and I am sure that, down to the present time, no opportunity has offered itself for giving any such explanation. Nevertheless, I will not be prevented from joining in the general joy on the present auspicious occasion." Pitt, unwilling, no doubt, to disturb the unanimity of the House, remaining silent, the address was voted without a dissentient voice. Lord Graham then moved a congratulatory address to the Queen. Fox remarked that his only objection arose from its being unusual; adding that when Margaret Nicholson made an attempt on the person

of the King, no such testimony of respect or loyalty was proposed to be given to her Majesty. "If, however," added he, "all Europe has admired the Queen's conduct during the late afflicting malady, there is likewise another person whose conduct has equally excited universal admiration, and whose character has acquired additional splendour in the eyes of all mankind. Should her Majesty be addressed, I can perceive no reason why an address ought not to be presented to the Prince of Wales." The Minister, who had hitherto resisted every provocation to mix in the debate, now rose, without, however, any avowed intention of contesting Fox's principle. He did not, he asserted, believe that a difference of opinion existed relative to the virtues of the heir-apparent, nor had he the slightest objection to address that illustrious person; but he could find no precedent for it. To queens, there were numerous instances on the journals of the House. As a proof of his assertion, he produced an address carried up to Queen Anne, on her husband Prince George of Denmark's recovery from sickness. Fox tacitly concurred in this example, though he might have replied that Anne reigned in her own right, not as a queen-consort. The two cases were, therefore, widely different. He preferred, however, acquiescence.

In the House of Peers—(where two speeches were pronounced, the first by the Earl of Chesterfield, the other by Lord Cathcart, throughout every word of which court adulation borrowed the language of gratitude to the Supreme Being for restoring to England her Sovereign)—one, and only one, difficulty was suggested respecting the propriety of their parliamentary proceeding. Earl Stanhope, a man who at every period of his life, whether as a commoner or as a peer, displayed the same ardent,

eccentric, fearless, indefatigable, and independent character, stood forward to state his doubts on the principle, as well as the propriety, of the intended address to the throne. "A bill," observed he, "is actually in progress, which contains a clause specifying the precise manner in which the King is to resume the reins of government on his recovery. The Queen and her Council are empowered to judge and to decide when this act may take place. Now, the two Houses having in the first instance ascertained, by the testimony of the physicians, the royal incapacity, and having next specified the mode and channel through which the nation may be satisfied of the Sovereign's complete restoration, is the present measure strictly parliamentary? I give full confidence to the fact of recovery, but it is essential that we should act in consonance to order." The Chancellor, who probably was not prepared for such an objection from such a quarter, made nevertheless a prompt and ingenious, if not a solid reply. "No declaration of the two Houses could," he said, "deprive the King of the right to govern; nor could any clause interrupt his reassuming his power, on the total cessation of his disorder." Alluding to the Regency Bill with a sort of repugnance, as a measure which he wished to be buried in oblivion, he denied that either the bill itself, or the clause inserted in it, was founded on the testimony of the physicians. "Parliament," he asserted, "had better proof of his Majesty's illness, namely, his having neither met the two Houses in person, nor issued a commission to execute the duty." These arguments, though coming from the woolsack, made no impression on Lord Stanhope. He retained and repeated his assertions; adding, nevertheless, "I am a friend to Ministers, and do not mean any insinuation prejudicial to them. My intention is only to put them on their

guard." I was of opinion at the time, and I remain so, that, as a matter of parliamentary order, Lord Stanhope was right in his positions. No other peer, however, supported him; the address both to the King and Queen passed unanimously, as it had done in the Commons.

These legislative deliberations were followed on the same night by the most brilliant as well as the most universal exhibition of national loyalty and joy ever witnessed in England. It originated not with the police nor with the Government, but with the people, and was the genuine tribute of their affection. No efforts of despotism could indeed have enforced it. London displayed a blaze of light from one extremity to the other; the illuminations extending, without any metaphor, from Hampstead and Highgate to Clapham, and even as far as Tooting, while the vast distance between Greenwich and Kensington presented the same dazzling appearance. Even the elements seemed to favour the spectacle, for the weather, though rather cold, was dry. Nor were the opulent and the middle orders the only classes who came conspicuously forward on this occasion. The poorest mechanics contributed their proportion, and instances were exhibited of cobblers' stalls decorated with one or two farthing candles. Such was the tribute of popular attachment manifested in March 1789 towards a Sovereign who, only seven years earlier, in March 1782, after losing a vast empire beyond the Atlantic, seemed to stand on a fearful precipice! But it would be unjust not to admit that the virtues of his character derived a lustre from the wise or fortunate selection of his Minister, from the recent severe affliction that he had himself undergone, and from the change of Administration which his son meditated to accomplish as soon as he should be invested with the

Regency. That measure itself, however necessary its adoption had been under the existing circumstances that produced it, and however deeply it then occupied the public mind, seemed now to disappear from recollection like a phantom. Every part of the public business, which during several months had been postponed or suspended in consequence of the King's incapacity, was immediately brought forward, and as early as the 16th of March, Sir George Yonge, Secretary at War, presented the Army Estimates in the House of Commons. The Opposition, whose vision of power had been so unexpectedly and improbably dissolved, again reduced to their former numbers, beheld Pitt resume the helm of State with augmented popularity amidst the general applauses of the country.

It is at this point of time that I conclude my Memoirs. Many motives, personal as well as public, prevent me from prolonging them, though I continued to sit in Parliament near five years afterwards, down to February 1794. I am already entered on my seventieth year, but if I cannot therefore describe my time of life in the language of Umbricius,

“Dum *nova* canities, dum *prima* et recta senectus,”

I can at least say with him,

———“Pedibus me  
Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.”

I am not, however, on that account less mindful of Horace's

“Solve senescentem.”

Other reasons prompt me here to lay down my pen. After the restoration of George III. to health another order of things seems to date, revolutionary France occupying the principal attention of Europe from 1789 to 1815. At the moment of finishing this

work I am deeply sensible to its numberless deficiencies ; some arising, no doubt, from my want of ability, more, as my enemies may perhaps assert, from want of information. My best excuse is Pope's, who says,

"If Queensberry to strip there's no compelling,  
'Tis from her handmaid we must take a Helen."

With Lord Clarendon and Burnet I well know that I can enter into no competition in the great component materials of contemporary history. Their rank, offices, and facility of access to the highest sources of knowledge, place them far above all rivalry on my part. Yet upon two points closely connected in themselves, and which ought to form the basis of historical composition—I mean truth and impartiality—I may challenge perhaps a superiority even to them. How, in fact, could Lord Clarendon divest himself of his partiality to Charles I. ; or the Bishop of Salisbury lay aside his attachment to William III.? I stand in no such predicament relative to George III. or to George IV. From the former Prince I received few or no benefits, though I supported him in Parliament and out of Parliament, during some of the most critical periods of his reign. Nor do I owe greater obligations to his successor, though peculiar circumstances led to his conferring on me the rank of a Baronet. The services that I rendered Pitt, to some of which I have had occasion to allude in former parts of these Memoirs, far outweigh, even in the estimation of his friends, any favours that I ever received from him. With Fox I never had any political connection, and rarely voted with him, either in or out of office, during nearly fourteen years that I remained in the House of Commons. Regarding both those illustrious men through the medium of time, I con-

template them only as objects of investigation, wholly divested of partiality or of enmity. Conscious that I stand on the verge of life, and that I must render an account at the bar of that Power from whom I received my being, of all that I have written, as well as of all that I have done, I can offer no homage to Him except truth; and to posterity my greatest, if not my only recommendation, must consist in my impartiality.





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## GEORGE III. AND IV.

*MARCH 1784.*

**I**N consequence of the triumphant termination of the long struggle between Pitt and Fox, followed by the dissolution of Parliament, George III. beheld himself suddenly raised to an eminence which had no parallel during the course of his reign since the first months after his accession to the crown. At the time when, in October 1760, on the decease of his grandfather, he ascended the throne in the midst of a successful war, in the flower of youth, and possessing the inestimable advantage of being born in the country over which he was called to reign, he enjoyed, it is true, a transitory popularity; but his unfortunate predilection for Lord Bute, his supposed deference to the counsels of the Princess-Dowager of Wales, and the resignation of Mr. Pitt, these circumstances had early deprived him of the affections of a large proportion of his subjects. The articles of the peace of 1763, which displayed either consummate ignorance of the interests of Great Britain or a still more criminal sacrifice of them to unworthy personal motives, when succeeded by the injudicious attempt to issue

general warrants in the person of Wilkes, rendered him an object of general disapprobation ; nor can we wonder that the calamities of the American war, heightened by the colours of party violence and held up to view through the medium of Opposition eloquence in both Houses of Parliament, should have made the King odious to a majority of his people. If, like Charles II. or William III., he had been childless, or had he possessed less firmness of character, private virtues, and acknowledged rectitude of intention, his position between 1777 and 1782 might have subjected him to disasters of the severest description. His two immediate predecessors could scarcely be regarded as other than German automata transported at a late period of life from their native country to a distant island on account of the necessity of the case. The incurable folly, bigotry, and despotic principles of the last prince of the Stuart line, rendering his government insupportable, and neither of his daughters having any issue, the English people were compelled to call the forty-fifth individual in the order of lineal succession to reign over them ; for it is a well-known fact that on the 1st day of August 1714, when Queen Anne expired, there were four-and-forty persons in Europe who possessed a better title to the crown of England, if the rights of blood could have alone conferred such a title, than George I. Exclusive of James II.'s direct descendants, not only the Sardinian reigning family, but the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XV., and all the princes or princesses of the House of Bourbon descending from Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, were nearer to the English throne by consanguinity than the Elector of Hanover. Even Maria Louisa, Queen of Spain, wife of Philip V. and mother of Ferdinand VI., who sprung in like manner from Charles I., might have pleaded

proximity of blood in preference to any descendants of James I.; nor must it be forgotten that every individual, of both sexes, legitimately sprung from Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, stood nearer the British crown than the line of Hanover, which descended from Sophia, youngest daughter of that princess. The consciousness of these facts, when added to their imperfect knowledge of the English language and manners, their very moderate abilities, and their German predilections or aversions, all these combined causes nullified in a certain degree the two first sovereigns of the House of Hanover. We may consider George I., nearly throughout his whole reign, and his successor from 1727 to 1741, as having been not less under the dominion of Walpole than Louis XIII. was governed by Richelieu, or Louis XV. by Fleury. Foreigners the two first princes of the House of Brunswick came, and foreigners they remained, residing on the banks of the Thames, but ever carried by their affection to the more obscure stream of the Leine, which washed the walls of their electoral palace at Hanover. To them the purchase and preservation of Bremen or Verden formed a more exhilarating object of ambition than the conquest of any Transatlantic colony or island. The sequestered county of Bentheim was dearer to them than Yorkshire or Devon, and the Sees of Winchester or Durham inspired less interest than the Westphalian Bishoprics of Hildesheim and Paderborn. They regarded the election of a King of the Romans as a matter of more serious consideration than the appointment of a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland or of a Governor of Jamaica, and anticipated the meeting of a diet at Ratisbon or at Frankfort with at least equal anxiety as the commencement of a session of Parliament at Westminster. Even during the latter years of his

reign, George II. looked not so much to Canada or to Martinique, not to India or America, but to the Elbe and the Weser for intelligence of importance. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, his relation, excited warmer emotions in his bosom than General Wolfe or Sir Edward Hawke; and the victory at Minden, by which his Electorate was secured, touched him more deeply than the glorious naval triumph obtained in the same year over Conflans in the Bay of Quiberon, which nearly annihilated the maritime power of France. Having escaped from London, George I. enjoyed the privilege of breathing his last sigh on the mountain of Ippenburen, or in the episcopal palace of his brother at Osnaburg, and was interred, not in Henry VII.'s Chapel among the kings of England, but among the Dukes of Hanover in his native land. The concluding act of his son's protracted life, on the 25th of October 1760, was at his rising from bed, only an hour before his apoplectic seizure, to open the window of his apartment at St. James's, in order to judge by the quarter from which the wind blew how soon he might receive news from his beloved Germany. Such princes, reigning rather by an elective than a hereditary title, and strangers to the people among whom they reluctantly remained a sort of royal captives, became necessarily subjected to Ministerial control. But George III., in whose person, as fourth in descent from the Princess Sophia, the parliamentary title of the family of Brunswick-Lunenburg seemed to assume a hereditary character after the lapse of almost half a century, and who could pretend to many advantages above his two predecessors, attempted to liberate himself from tutelage. It is not to be doubted that previous to his grandfather's decease the Earl of Bute, amidst the retirement of Kew, had awakened in the breast of his royal pupil the desire of taking

a more affirmative part in the administration of public affairs whenever he should ascend the throne than any king had permanently assumed or exercised since William III. The dismissal of Mr. Pitt, and his own substitution in the place of the Duke of Newcastle as First Lord of the Treasury, formed early acts of the new reign ; and though Lord Bute soon retired from his perilous eminence at the head of the Treasury, yet the succeeding Cabinets under whatever name, of Grenville, of Grafton, or of North, were all supposed to be equally amenable to a secret, mysterious tribune or influence which in the last resort sanctioned their measures.

No pleasures distracted the young King's attention from his public duties ; every dispatch of consequence, whether foreign or domestic, was regularly transmitted to the Queen's House, submitted to his inspection, perused by him with care, and not unfrequently underwent his animadversions or observations. So active a personal superintendence, though it could not be unconstitutional, as the responsibility for every measure adopted necessarily lay with Ministers, yet being a fact well ascertained in public opinion, subjected the sovereign to comments which would not have applied with the same force to George I. and George II. The American war, however, undertaken not for the extension of royal prerogative but for the support of parliamentary supremacy, nevertheless, as it had for its object territorial dominion and the right of taxation, was supposed deeply to affect the passions of the sovereign. He unquestionably adhered to the prosecution of that attempt to reduce to obedience his insurgent subjects with all the tenacity of his character, even after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown had precluded every rational hope of success. Between the period of Lord North's resig-



nation in March 1782 and the close of the year 1783 he neither enjoyed domestic repose nor had he as yet regained the affections of his people, nor could he recover the political power and influence which had slipped from his grasp. Lord North and Fox, conscious that he would burst his bonds on the first occasion, were preparing for him new fetters, when a second son of the very Minister whom he had divested of employment at the beginning of his reign restored him in the course of little more than three months to liberty and popularity. Such was the position of George III. in the spring of 1784.

It may nevertheless be justly questioned whether Pitt could have maintained him in that flattering elevation, or whether his own virtues, when operating unchecked by the load of the American war, would have permanently secured to him in so great a degree the hearts of his people, if he had not been aided at this period of his reign by the appearance and conduct of his eldest son. That young Prince, emancipating himself from paternal control as soon as he reached his twenty-first year, instantly and openly placed himself at the head of the party with which his father was then contending for every object dear to him as a sovereign. Previous, however, to entering on any particulars relative to the political line which he thought proper to embrace, it is indispensable that I should accurately portray the heir-apparent himself—a Prince who, at the hour I am now writing (in November 1816), sways as Regent the sceptre of these realms—a Prince under whose government or auspices we have seen Napoleon overturned, France as well as Europe rescued from his sanguinary and destructive dominion, and peace diffused on the Continent from Lisbon to Moscow,—of such a Prince we might be



*Engraved by A. Heath.*

GEORGE IV.



tempted to exclaim in classic language applied to the English people,

"Te multa prece, te prosequitur mero  
Defuso pateris, et laribus tuum  
Miscet nomen, uti Græcia Castoris  
Et magni memor Herculis,"

if we did not recollect that the greatest acts have in every age been performed under sovereigns of the meanest endowments, and that Marlborough flourished under Anne, as Wellington conquered at Waterloo under the present Regency. Gibbon, when alluding to the reduction of Britain by the Romans, remarks that "after a war of about forty years, undertaken by the most stupid (Claudius), maintained by the most dissolute (Nero), and terminated by the most timid of all the Emperors (Domitian), the far greater part of the island submitted to the Roman yoke." I am well aware that the actions of the most illustrious commanders, naval and military, as well as the measures of the wisest Ministers, emanating from the sovereign who has made choice of such superior men to direct his counsels or to execute his orders, may by adulation be attributed to him as the prime mover of the state machine. It is thus that the same poet claims for Augustus, as a species of presiding deity in human form, the merit of every triumph obtained under his reign on the Rhine or on the Euphrates. Horace designates him as a terrestrial Jupiter, master of events—

"Te copias, Te consilium, et Tuos  
Prebete Divos."

But the words which poetic gratitude or flattery might, without greatly outraging truth, apply to the second Cæsar, could not be used when speaking of the son of George III. without exciting ridicule. Almost as well might the acts of Richelieu be as-

signed to the genius of Louis XIII. Augustus, however justly we may reprobate his proscriptions as a triumvir, redeemed them by his conduct after he became Emperor by his rare moderation, his regard for public opinion, his clemency, magnanimity, and watchful vigilance to promote the felicity of the Roman world. Master of his passions as well as of his appetites, both of which he restrained, if not within the rules of virtue, at least within the limits of decorum, he never subjected himself to plebeian censure by his irregularities. Maintaining the modest simplicity of the consular ages in the interior of his palace on the Palatine Hill, his table never became a scene of sensuality, intoxication, and riot. Economising the public treasure while seated between Horace and Mæcenæ, he protected, honoured, and rewarded talents. His very name is connected with a portion of time distinguished in the annals of mankind by its superiority to the period which preceded or followed it.

Every man who undertakes to commemorate the events of his own time should, in addition to the most severe impartiality and the most sacred observance of truth, possess the accurate information without which he can lay no claim to the attention or belief of posterity. Lord Clarendon, Burnet, Dodington, and Horace Walpole must, from their rank and situation, have necessarily had access to sources of knowledge which were unattainable by individuals in the inferior walks of life. My enemies have not omitted to accuse me, in addition to many other deficiencies and disqualifications, of being personally unacquainted with the very Ministers or Princes whom I delineated. Such a charge, if well founded, must unquestionably vitiate the whole work, and place these Memoirs by the side of Varillas, whose "*Histoire Secrète de la Maison*

de Medecis" would be read with infinite amusement were we not convinced that it is more a work of imagination than a well-authenticated narrative of facts. The editors of the "Quarterly Review" have endeavoured to impress the public with a conviction that, however tolerably correct (as they admit) my character of the late Earl of Liverpool might be in the main, yet "I could have had no personal acquaintance with that nobleman." My answer to this imputation stands prefixed to the third edition of the "Memoirs of my Own Time," and will satisfactorily prove to posterity my "personal acquaintance with the celebrated Charles Jenkinson."<sup>1</sup> The "Edinburgh Review," after noticing my brief allusion to the graces of the Prince Regent's manner, adds, "However unques-

<sup>1</sup> The author here alludes to "An Answer to the Calumnious Misrepresentations of the 'Quarterly Review,' the 'British Critic,' and the 'Edinburgh Review,'" 1818, where he wrote as follows:—"After garbling, not citing the account that I have given of the late Lord Liverpool, and omitting, for reasons which will be obvious to every reader, some of the most discriminating circumstances of that nobleman's ordinary demeanour described by me, the 'Quarterly Review' says: 'In this character of Lord Liverpool, though it may be in the main tolerably correct, there are some errors which prove that Sir Nathaniel had no personal acquaintance with the person whose portrait he draws. For instance, nothing can be less accurate than the statement that his lordship's education was narrow, and that he was more read in men than in books!' I not only was known to Mr. Jenkinson with great familiarity from 1781 down to 1786, when he went up to the House of Peers, but I was in constant habits of meeting and conversing with him. I have dined at his country seat, Addiscombe Place, near Croydon, in 1784, as probably the Dowager-Countess of Liverpool and the present Duchess of Dorset, who were both there, may remember. Even down to a much later period of his life he continued to honour me with his regard; and as late as 1797 he presented me himself, in the Queen's Drawing-Room at St. James's, to the Princess of Orange. So much for my "personal acquaintance" with the Earl of Liverpool. As to his "university education" and his having "continued all his life what is called a *bookish* man," which the reviewers assert, I can only repeat that, though he might be "a classic scholar," and might "have possessed a great variety of learning," yet his whole life, his speeches in Parliament, and his elevation sufficiently prove that "he had studied Kings and Ministers more than books."—E.D.

tionably just this commemoration may be, it would have had more effect from a more competent judge, or from one who had better opportunities of observation." This attempt to show that I lay claim to a personal knowledge of his Royal Highness which I never possessed, places me under the necessity of proving that I have not imposed on the world.

That from the year 1783 down to 1789 I never had the honour to partake in any of the festivities which very frequently occurred during that period at Carlton House is unquestionably true, but I was only excluded in common with every other member of both Houses of Parliament known to be generally a supporter of Pitt's Administration and an opponent of the Coalition. Yet even then I had continual opportunities of meeting the Prince of Wales in private company, particularly at the assemblies of the French and Spanish ambassadors, as well as at Cumberland House. Nor, living as I did, chiefly in the metropolis, where I mixed almost every day with persons of both sexes who had constant access to his Royal Highness and passed much of their time in his society, could I fail to be well informed on all the points which regarded his private life. But after I quitted Parliament in 1794, I have had the honour to be personally invited by him while standing in the drawing-room at St. James's, and to dine at Carlton House with some of the most illustrious guests who were ever entertained at that palace. Among them I may mention the late Stadtholder and his two sons, the eldest of whom is the present King of the Netherlands; the Duke of York, and various foreign Ministers, as well as English noblemen and gentlemen. At the pavilion at Brighton I have been admitted to his table when the company was composed only of a few select individuals. During part of my life in 1797 and 1798 I was regularly

invited to meet his Royal Highness at dinner as one of a small political rather than convivial party, and early in 1799 he was graciously pleased to designate me, under his official seal, his future Historiographer. The nomination was accompanied by his permission and desire, not verbal, but written, that I would henceforward wear that uniform "which was exclusively reserved for his family and friends." On this occasion I was presented to him at Carlton House by Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt in the most private manner, without form, and treated by him with condescending familiarity. If, in addition to these facts, I add that in 1813 I was created a baronet solely by him—not by Lord Liverpool, who, as I have reason to know, prevented my being raised to that dignity in the preceding year, when my name was inscribed by the Regent on the list—it will probably be admitted that I have enjoyed "some opportunities of observation," and am not speaking of a person unknown to me, like the Prince of Brazil or of the Asturias.

His person was undoubtedly cast by nature in an elegant and pleasing mould, of a just height, well-proportioned, and with due regard to symmetry, but it had, nevertheless, something diffused over it indicative of repose or of sloth, rather than of energy or activity. He would have appeared more appropriately decorated with the attributes of Bacchus than with those of Apollo; with the thyrsus and the bunch of grapes than with the bow and arrow that dispatched the serpent Python. His limbs and movements, which certainly did not want grace, were deficient in elasticity. There was from head to foot a flaccidity of muscle and a rotundity of outline inimical to our conceptions of masculine strength or beauty. His countenance, which partook of these characteristics, was handsome and prepossessing and



commonly gay, though at times it became suddenly overcast and sullen. He possessed no prominent or marked features, and he wanted the fine Greek nose of the King, his father; it was a round, not an oval contour of face, destitute of strong expression, though lighted up by much animation, with grey eyes and a fair complexion; add to these corporeal endowments a vast quantity of light-brown hair, which then adorned his forehead and temples. He was never slender, not even at twenty; on the contrary, in the flower of youth it was easy to foresee that he would eventually become corpulent. His portrait and figure bore, as I always thought, some similarity to Edward IV., who is described by Comines as having been when young the handsomest prince of his age, but who from indulgence to his appetites grew immoderately large, and accelerated his end by excesses. Perhaps the Prince of Wales might be compared more aptly to James, Duke of Monmouth, son of Charles II., who was regarded by his contemporaries as the individual of his time on whom Nature had lavished her choicest personal gifts. Yet the "*quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa*" never could have applied to the Prince of Wales at any period of his life, though he was, like the lover of Pyrrha, very frequently "*perfusus liquidis odoribus*." His manners were captivating, noble, and dignified, yet unaffectedly condescending, if he had only known how to limit his condescension, which too often degenerated into familiarity. Markham, Archbishop of York, to whom the care of his education had been principally committed, fulfilled every expectation that could justly be formed on that point. Homer, as well as Virgil, was familiar to the Prince of Wales; and his memory, which was very tenacious, enabled him to cite with graceful readiness the favourite passages

of either poet ; yet never was any man less a pedant. When Sir John Macpherson was first presented to him in 1787, on his return from Bengal, where he had succeeded to the Government-General on Hastings's departure, the Prince said to him, "I wished much to know you, for *your* friend and *my* physician, Sir John Elliot, never ceased talking of you to me, and singing your praises"—

"Te veniente die, te decedente canebat."

He was conscious of possessing a most retentive memory, and he gave me an extraordinary proof of it one day after dinner in November 1802, at the Pavilion at Brighton, when he recounted to me some circumstances of a visit made by William, Duke of Cumberland, to the King and Queen, where he was personally present. I ventured to remind him that as he was born in August 1762, and the Duke died in the autumn of 1765, his own age at the time could not have much exceeded three years. "I grant it," answered he, "but the impression of that day and scene can never be erased from my mind ; it is as present to me as any recent event. My father and mother received him in an arbour of the garden at the Queen's House. The Duke was dressed in a snuff-coloured suit of clothes down to his knee ; he took me in his arms and placed me on his knee, where he held me a long time. The enormity of his bulk excited my wonder, and probably fixed his image on my recollection."

It is unquestionable that the King manifested an early partiality for his second son, Frederick, while on the other hand the Queen displayed more attachment towards George, an attachment which has been reciprocal, for never did any mother receive warmer marks of filial affection than he has uniformly exhibited towards her. Anne of Austria was not

blessed in Louis XIV. with a more tender and respectful son than Charlotte of Mecklenburg has found in the Prince of Wales. Even to his brothers and sisters he has always shown feelings of the most generous kind, not less since his accession to the Regency than while he was only an elevated individual. This feature of his character must be considered as very amiable. I know that when the Dukes of Clarence, Kent, and Sussex have each at different times laboured under their father's severest displeasure, and were banished from his presence, they have been sheltered or protected at Carlton House, not, as I believe, from any sentiment of opposition to the King, but from fraternal kindness and sympathy. To the protection of letters, and of men of genius or of distinguished talents, he always made pretence, and on some occasions he has given pecuniary proofs of it ; but he was always too profuse, and consequently too poor to be able, even assuming the desire, to extend any munificent patronage to literature. Economical princes, and those only, can afford to be liberal. He has, however, always emulated the fame of relieving indigent or suffering merit, and he no doubt felt the inclination, though he commonly did not possess the means. He has during many years allowed and paid the well-known Captain Morris £300 a year. I derive the fact from Morris himself. The donation was made by his Royal Highness as a remuneration for the entertainment afforded by his poetical compositions, which he sung after having composed, and which contributed to the Prince's delight in nights dedicated to festivity. An intimate friend of mine, Sir John Macpherson, whom he admitted during fourteen years to very familiar and confidential intercourse, having related to him various inter-

esting particulars relative to the celebrated Flora Macdonald, who so heroically devoted herself to save Charles Edward in 1746 after the defeat of Culloden, his Royal Highness was strongly affected at the recital. When Macpherson added that she was still living, and in contracted circumstances, he instantly, after expressing his surprise and concern, ordered my friend to wait on her in his name, and to inform her that he should allow her a pension of fifty pounds for her life, commencing from the same day. "I make you the paymaster of my allowances," continued he, "and I rely on your carrying it to her." I own that when Sir John first imparted this fact to me it excited in my mind great admiration, but on questioning him several years afterwards, he, with some reluctance, owned that he had obeyed the Prince's commands, and had twice paid Flora Macdonald the sum of fifty pounds. "She died at the end of two years," added he, "but his Royal Highness entirely forgot to reimburse me, and the annuity came out of my own pocket."

While, however, he would be so forgetful of a woman, for whose loyalty and sufferings he professed to feel a deep sense of compassion, he lavished prodigious sums on other females who ministered to his pleasures. An actress of extraordinary beauty, who to the charms of her person joined an enchanting voice, but who died the martyr of excess not many years ago—I mean the late Mrs. Crouch—obtained from him, in one of those moments when weak men can refuse nothing, and when even the parsimonious become liberal, an engagement under his hand for £10,000. Her profusion reducing her to want, and her clamours for payment, often accompanied with menaces, rendering her demands intolerable, the Prince determined

on making an exertion to liquidate the debt or to regain the instrument in her possession. For this purpose he sent a confidential friend to the lady, who then resided in the Haymarket, scarcely a hundred yards from Carlton House. He was empowered to offer her three thousand guineas provided that she would instantly deliver up the note, and the money was put into three bags containing each one thousand guineas. Having got into a hackney-coach, accompanied by two of his Royal Highness's footmen as a protection in case of any accident, he drove to the lady's door. It was night, and as soon as he sent up his name she admitted him. Conscious that her wants would probably render her complying, he determined to ascertain whether a third part of the sum which he had brought with him would not suffice to redeem the engagement. With that view, leaving two of the bags under the care of the footmen in the coach, he ascended the staircase with the third in his hands, and on entering the chamber announced himself as sent to her from his master, the Prince. "Knowing, Madame, your distress," said he, addressing her, "though his own finances are in the greatest state of embarrassment, I am sent to you by his Royal Highness. Here are a thousand guineas; it is all the relief he is able to extend;—but I must carry him back the paper which is in your possession if you think proper to accept the money." So saying, he unsealed the bag and disclosed its fascinating contents. The actress, thus assailed, was not able to resist such a temptation; she complied with the conditions, returned the engagement, and the gentleman, instantly regaining the hackney-coach, brought back two out of the three bags that had been intrusted to him, together with the written engagement, which the Prince immediately com-

mitted to the flames. I received this account at Carlton House, in the year 1799, from the very individual who performed the service not a long time after it took place.

In all the accomplishments or attainments which constitute a member of elegant society, as well as in every convivial quality that could delight or captivate, the Prince of Wales yielded to no individual of his time. For music he nourished a passion, and displayed a fine taste, being himself not only an admirer but a performer. He sung an excellent song, of which I have heard him exhibit a proof in a select company after dinner at Sir John Macpherson's, at Brompton Grove; another talent, of a more dangerous nature, which he possessed, was mimicry. He did not even always spare his own relations. The Princess Amelia, daughter of George II., formed one of the subjects on whom he often exerted his powers of ludicrous imitation. Her guttural German dialect, and the peculiarities of her enunciation, offered a scope for his ability which he could not resist in that walk of humour. He danced with uncommon grace, nor did he ride with less agility and ease, though he never showed as decided a partiality for the pleasures of the chase as had been manifested by his father. He rarely sat down to play, and never, I believe, lost any considerable sum at the gaming-table; but he was induced at one period of his life, in an evil hour, to enter deeply into the mysteries of Newmarket. This initiation and its consequences proved very injurious, not only to his purse, but in other respects; the affair of "Diamond" and "Hamiltonian," two horses of great celebrity, and the practices of Chiffney, a jockey, who was accused of unfair conduct, excited much obloquy against his Royal Highness on the turf; his high rank alone, I believe, prevented his being

expelled by the "Jockey Club."<sup>1</sup> At Egham races and at Ascot Heath he won a very large sum on one of his horses named "Baronet," when the King was present on the ground, who riding up to the prince, "Your Baronets," said he, "are more productive than mine; I made fourteen last week, but I got nothing by them; your single 'Baronet' is worth all mine put together."

To the honour of the Marchioness of Hertford, when she obtained an ascendant over his Royal Highness's mind, the first noble and beneficial use that she made of it was to induce him without delay to sell all his race-horses, to break up that establishment, and to bid adieu to the turf. In conversation he was not only affable and communicative, but most entertaining—full of anecdote which proved an extensive acquaintance with history, and vast powers of recollection in military information relating to the strength of the Continental sovereigns throughout Europe. The Prince excited astonishment by the accuracy of his knowledge. I never can forget Count Tauenzien's surprise when in 1797 he was sent over from Berlin to this country for the purpose of announcing the present King of Prussia's accession to the throne. I dined three times in his company when the Prince of Wales was present, and on one of those occasions his Royal Highness entered into such minute details relative to every Prussian regiment, cavalry as well as infantry, that it seemed difficult to believe he had not passed his whole life in the service of Brandenburg. If his conversation delighted those persons who were admitted to the honour of his society, that gratifica-

<sup>1</sup> The Prince of Wales disposed of his stud in 1791, and Samuel Chiffney, the jockey, published his version of the case in a volume entitled "*Genius Genuine, a Treatise on Horses and Horse-Racing.*" This was originally published at five guineas, and the book is said to have been suppressed at the instigation of the Prince of Wales.—ED.

tion, it must be reluctantly owned, was often purchased at his own expense, sometimes at theirs; for he seldom imposed any restraint on his opinions or on his ideas, as, on the circulating of the glass, forgetful of Cardinal Retz's profound observation, "*Qu'il vaut mieux faire des sottises que d'en dire.*" He allowed himself a latitude of comment upon almost every subject, which entailed on himself many inconveniences, nor was he by any means delicate, I might say decorous, in his choice of expressions. Charles II. could hardly have been more licentious when in company with Buckingham, Rochester, and Arlington, than was the Prince of Wales among his friends, or rather his companions. We are taught to believe from history, and Shakespeare has contributed to spread the supposition, that the son of Henry IV. indulged in similar or even greater irregularities of deportment before he ascended the throne; but if he did, he redeemed, as Henry V., the deviations of the heir-apparent, which disappear in the lustre of his subsequent victories and triumphant reign. In personal courage, though it has never been put to the test, I believe the Prince of Wales, like all the individuals of his house, to be in no way deficient. That George III. would have placed himself at the head of his forces, if Napoleon had ever indulged his threats of invasion, and would with as much alacrity as William III. have perished if necessary in defence of his crown and people, no man can doubt. I see not any reason to question that his son would have fully participated those feelings and those dangers. But he wanted the King's nerves. The father had led a life of unvarying temperance, self-denial, and domestic regularity, practising every renunciation that could tend to confirm a naturally sound constitution. The heir-apparent had committed every excess, and gra-



tified every indulgence calculated to undermine and finally to destroy a frame put together by Nature with uncommon care. He had been rescued many times by medical art and attendance from the most imminent peril, or rather from the very jaws of dissolution. After those bacchanalian festivals which frequently took place at Carlton House or at Brighton, in order to obtain relief when attacked by fever, he very early in life had recourse to a fatal expedient—the lancet; long before he reached his thirtieth year he had been bled above a hundred times. Elliot, who was then his principal physician, often refused to authorise or to permit of the operation, against which he remonstrated as only a palliative affording momentary relief, but producing eventually the worst consequences. It is a fact that when the Prince found himself thus debarred of professional aid, he has frequently opened a vein for himself. I recollect the first time Dr. Warren was called in to him in one of his violent paroxysms of fever, about the year 1786, that physician declared his pulse could not be counted, and resembled a machine completely disorganised. Sir Walter Farquhar has attended him at later periods of his life under similar circumstances. The unavoidable result of a perpetual recurrence of such disorders, when followed by the lancet, was a debility of the nervous system, and a necessity for resorting to the same stimulant, wine. Even wine not being found sufficiently strong to produce the desired effect, and his stomach demanding more powerful aid, liqueurs succeeded of every description. These pernicious though gratifying indulgences operated so injuriously on his frame that he could not support darkness. After attending the funeral of his sister, the Princess Amelia, at Windsor, he was accustomed to sleep in an apartment illuminated by a number of wax can-

dles, the light of which was indispensable to procure him repose. Two evils followed naturally or necessarily from his frequent excesses at table. The first was the habit of keeping very late hours, and the second, still more injurious, the practice of remaining late in bed. His enemies reported that a prince so enslaved to his appetites could not, even if he would, transact public business, while his adherents justified or palliated his mode of life by pleading his exclusion from any participation in the councils of the crown. It is thus we find the Bishop of Llandaff, Watson, expressing himself in his "Anecdotes of his Own Life," lately published. Writing to the Duke of Queensberry as late as 1803, the Bishop says of the Prince of Wales, that "he was a man occupied in trifles, because he had no opportunity of displaying his talents in the conduct of great concerns." That prelate even ventures to form "strong omens of his future able and auspicious government, whenever he should ascend the throne." I own I never entertained such expectations.

He was a most fascinating and accomplished gentleman, but he wanted all the qualities of a wise or of a great prince: self-command, application, economy, activity, firmness, and above all, economical principles. Carlton House, when not a scene of intemperance, became Thomson's "Castle of Indolence," delay and attendance. Palmer the cutler, a man of celebrity in his time, told me in 1798 that he had instructed both the King and the Prince in the use of that necessary instrument of the toilet, the razor. "His Majesty," added he, "is the most awkward of scholars. He never even knew how to handle a razor. His Royal Highness, on the contrary, performs the operation on his chin with a facility and a grace not to be described in words;

but I could scarcely ever arrive in time for the King, who rose so early that he was always seated at his dressing-table before I reached the Queen's House from St. James's Street; for the Prince I never could come sufficiently late, and almost invariably had to wait for his rising or being visible, at whatever hour I attended." In his bed, rolling about from side to side in a state approaching to nudity, he gave audience to his friends and received information of every sort; it constituted his throne, his cabinet, and his council-chamber. Intoxication in the most extensive sense commonly followed the banquets of Carlton House, the effects of which have more than once very nearly proved fatal. His Royal Highness has been, as I know, critically rescued from suffocation, when the delay of half an hour, or even a shorter time, would have rendered unavailing all assistance. These facts could not be altogether concealed from the public, nor buried within the recesses of his palace. As his father, at an early period of his reign, had been caricatured under the figure of "Farmer George," riding before the Queen to market with the produce of his dairy, so the Prince was portrayed in the shops of Bond Street as a "Voluptuary in the agonies of indigestion," his waistcoat unbuttoned, his respiration impeded by repletion, and the board before him covered with bottles of maraschino or cedrate. The Emperor Claudius, who may be said to have expired at table, is designated in a manner somewhat similar by Tacitus. Nor were these degrading excesses exclusively the vices of his youth; they have accompanied him into age. As recently as the last days of February 1814 he had nearly expired, the victim of intemperance or intoxication, at his own palace in Pall-Mall. It happened thus:—He dined at home on that day with a very select party, viz.,

the Duke of York, Sir Carnaby Haggerstone, who married a sister of Mrs. Fitzherbert, Sir Robert Leighton, and Mr. Colman.<sup>1</sup> It is a fact that the Regent of this country sent for the last-mentioned gentleman, then a prisoner in the King's Bench prison for debt, who was liberated during the evening in order to make one of the company. His convivial powers had greatly endeared Colman to his Royal Highness, who being at length carried from table to his chamber in a state of total insensibility, was there undressed and put to bed. Fortunately one of his attendants, entering the apartment, discovered him with his head pendent over the bedside, black in the face, and very nearly suffocated. In a few minutes he would have been no more. Recourse was instantly had to Sir Walter Farquhar, who being himself very unwell at the time, reluctantly arose and repaired to Carlton House. The Prince soon recovered, and a fit of the gout, which happily followed this debauch, restored his accustomed health. All these particulars were related to me within ten days after they took place by a great nobleman,<sup>2</sup> my particular friend, who then held a high employment under Government, and who well knew their authenticity. I shall not, however, name him, though he is deceased, but the facts will easily obtain belief. Even now, in 1817, caricatures of the Regent are to be seen, even in the meanest provincial towns, bestriding a tun inscribed with the words "Prince's Mixture."

At every period of time the amours of sovereigns, as they have commonly influenced the felicity of their people and their own destiny, have attracted the attention of historians. Inez de Castro, in the

<sup>1</sup> George Colman the Younger, lessee of the Haymarket Theatre.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The Earl of Cholmondeley, created a Marquis by the Prince Regent in 1815.—ED.

Portuguese annals, has furnished subject for the tragic muse, while the Princess of Eboli, mistress to Philip II., makes a scarcely less conspicuous figure in those of Spain. To the salutary influence of Agnes Sorel over Charles VII. was eminently due, as we have reason to believe, the expulsion of the English from France. The ascendant of Diana of Poitiers over Henry II., and of Gabrielle d'Estrées over Henry IV., have supplied matter not only for history but for romance. We cannot, indeed, separate the last of those sovereigns from the perpetually changing object of his licentious love, which intrude upon every part of his reign, diminish the lustre of his character, and stand prominent in the Memoirs of Sully no less than in the writings of De Thou and of Mezeray. The court of Louis XIV., from the time that he attained manhood down to his fortieth year, resembled that of Cythera, where, among many others, Maria Mancini, La Vallière, The Montespan, and the young Fontanges successively contended for his affections, till, fatigued and disgusted, he sank into the arms of the Widow Scarron,<sup>1</sup> who, though neither his queen nor his mistress, yet may be said to have greatly influenced the councils of France during thirty years. Even the less celebrated objects of Louis XV.'s attachment, the Duchess de Châteauroux, the Marchioness de Pompadour, and the Countess du Barri, occupy no mean place in the political records of the eighteenth century under that feeble and dissolute monarch.

The English princes, with few exceptions, have been more emancipated from female sway, yet under the Plantagenets we read of the empire exercised by Alice Pierce over the declining age of Edward III.,

<sup>1</sup> Madame de Maintenon, who is said to have been secretly married to Louis XIV. in 1685.—ED.

and of the influence which Jane Shore's matchless attractions of person as well as of mind gave her over Edward IV. Charles II.'s whole life, after his restoration, was passed in the arms of his various mistresses, one of whom, a foreigner, created Duchess of Portsmouth, (if we may believe Burnet) supported him in bed during his last moments. That writer assures us so violent were the animosities, rivalries, and jealousies of these Circes that the palace of Whitehall became a scene of perpetual discord, and Charles remained frequently inaccessible for several days to his Ministers while he was engaged in vain attempts to tranquillise the English harem. Barbara Villiers, Mademoiselle de la Querouaille, and Nell Gwynne, are still perpetuated among us in the ducal families of Fitzroy, Lennox, and Beauclerk,<sup>1</sup> as Lucy Waters, who gave birth to the ill-fated Duke of Monmouth, is represented in those of Buccleuch and of Déloraine. Arabella Churchill, mistress of James II. previous to his accession to the throne, claims a double place in our history—as sister of the illustrious John, Duke of Marlborough, the Wellington of the last century, and as having given birth to the Duke of Berwick, the conqueror of Almanza. The German females, the Kielmanseg, the Schulembergs, and the Walmodens, who rather disgraced than adorned the annals of George I. and George II., are only known by their rapacity or remembered by their venality, which it is pretended they exerted even in the sale of British peerages. However astonishing it may appear, we have recent Ministerial authority for the fact, a Secretary of State having asserted it from the Treasury bench while speaking in reply to Lord Folkestone, the lineal descendant of Sir Jacob Bouverie, who was created a viscount in 1747 by the Countess of Yar-

<sup>1</sup> Grafton, Richmond, and St. Albans.—ED.

mouth's interest. It is commonly believed that he paid her £1000 more for obtaining this gradation of the peerage, namely, £11,000, than the sum which was given by the other individuals who were raised at the same time to the Baron's bench. Lord Folkestone, when thus reminded of the origin of his nobility, did not deny the allegation, contenting himself with the observation "that it ill became a Minister of George III. to rake up the ashes of George II. in order to throw them in his face." Even as recently as 1815 higher gradations of the British and Irish peerage than those previously conferred were supposed to have been procured for several well-known individuals (not, however, gratuitously) by the wife of a State Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

George III. presented throughout his whole life a rare model of decorum and of conjugal fidelity. His son, on the contrary, never imposed the slightest restraint on his inclinations, nor observed any privacy in their pursuit. Even before he escaped from parental control, while still detained at Windsor or confined within the walls of the Queen's House, he became enamoured of Mrs. Robinson, who as a performer at the theatre in the character of "Perdita" in the "Winter's Tale" had already captivated the town. She possessed surprising beauty, such as I have rarely seen equalled in any woman, and might well rescue her and my native city, Bristol, from the imputation of producing females deficient in that endowment. She even emulated a higher distinction, and aspired to be known to future times as the English "Sappho;" but though her productions breathe a plaintive and pleasing strain, yet she can challenge no compari-

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain that Wraxall is correct in saying that *British* peerages were obtained in this manner, but some *Irish* titles were spoken of with contempt as "got through backstairs influence, by you know who!"—ED.

son with the poetess equally adored by Greece and Rome, of whom Horace says—

“Spirat adhuc amor,  
Vivuntque commissi calores,  
Æoliæ fidibus puellæ.”

Mrs. Robinson was probably as superior to Sappho in personal charms as she fell below the Lesbian girl in poetic genius. The Prince's attachment to her, which was fugitive, served only by its speedy extinction to embitter the remainder of her life, without much augmenting her fortune. Her health and her beauty became victims to acute rheumatic disorders, under which, aggravated by pecuniary distress, she finally sank, after surviving all her attractions.

Coeval with his passion for Perdita was his attachment to Lady Augusta Campbell, the “Ophelia” of the court of George III. She was a daughter of the Duchess of Argyll, whose extraordinary beauty, like that of her sister the Countess of Coventry, attracted admiring multitudes wherever they moved. I have heard the late Earl of Clermont say, that when walking with the two sisters in the Mall of St. James's Park, such crowds collected to gaze upon them, and so violent and importunate was their curiosity, that he, as well as the other gentlemen accompanying the Gunnings, have been obliged to draw their swords in order to defend the ladies, while they effected a precipitate retreat into Lord Harrington's house at the corner of the Stable Yard. Lady Coventry I never saw, but the Duchess of Argyll presented, even when far advanced in life, and with very decayed health, a form, figure, and complexion which it would have been vain to seek elsewhere. She seemed composed of a finer clay than the rest of her sex. In none of



these transcendant presents of nature could the daughter pretend to compete in any degree with the Duchess, nor could she, without violating truth, be addressed like Tyndaris, as—

“O matre pulchra, filia pulchrior.”

Her youth, her rank, and her face, which was very charming, though not intelligent, compensated for the defects of her shape and figure ; but she possessed neither accomplishments nor mental qualifications to retain her “Hamlet” in lasting bondage. If not so unfortunate as the daughter of Polonius, yet she has passed a long and obscure life, far from the splendour of courts or capitals, forgotten on the banks of the distant Clyde, in a severe climate, within the walls of an antique castle, by no means in affluence, after having undergone the humiliation of seeing her husband, General Clavering, committed to Newgate for prevarication by order of the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup> Lady Sarah Lennox, who some twenty years earlier had made a similar or perhaps a deeper impression on the heart of George III., born, like Lady Augusta Campbell, in the highest rank of life, has, like her, undergone some of the severest vicissitudes to which human nature is subjected. She still exists, under the total privation of sight, extreme old age, and not very enlarged pecuniary circumstances. The Prince soon transferred his affections to Lady Melbourne, no longer in her first youth when she became the object of his admiration.<sup>2</sup> She might, nevertheless, well challenge such a preference. A commanding figure, exceeding

<sup>1</sup> General Clavering made an attempt to justify the Duke of York during the investigation of the Commander-in-Chief's conduct in 1809, the consequence of which was that he was committed to Newgate for prevarication.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth, only daughter of Sir Ralph Milbank, was married to Sir Peniston Lamb (afterwards Viscount Melbourne) in 1769.—ED.

the middle height, full of grace and dignity, an animated countenance, intelligent features, captivating manners and conversation; all these, and many other attractions, enlivened by coquetry, met in Lady Melbourne. Her husband had been principally known by the distinguished place that he occupies in the annals of meretricious pleasure, the memoirs of Mrs. Bellamy or Mrs. Baddeley, the syrens and courtesans of a former age. His father, Sir Matthew Lamb, from an inferior situation in life having attained a splendid fortune and elevated himself to the baronetage, his son constructed a magnificent mansion in Piccadilly, on the spot where stand the buildings denominated "The Albany."<sup>1</sup> Unwilling to call it from his own name, Lamb House, and having consulted George Selwyn on the choice of a proper distinction for his town residence, Selwyn exhorted him to call it "House Lamb."<sup>2</sup> Lord North raised him twice to the dignity of the Irish peerage, first as a baron, and ten years later as a viscount. In 1784 he held the post of a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to his Royal Highness, who, mindful of his tried worth and eminent services in the evening of his days, not long since has placed him in the British House of Peers.<sup>3</sup>

To Lady Melbourne succeeded, after a short interval which I shall not fill up, the Duchess of Devonshire, but of what nature was that attachment, and what limits were affixed to it by the Duchess, must remain matter of conjecture. I know, however, that during her pregnancy in 1785,

<sup>1</sup> The house was sold to him in 1770 by the second Lord Holland, and he subsequently exchanged it with the Duke of York for the mansion in Whitehall, now known as Dover House.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> The story is not well told. He was made an Irish Baron in the very year that he took this house.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> He was created an Irish Baron in 1770, an Irish Viscount in 1781, and a Baron of the United Kingdom in 1815. He died 22d July 1828.—ED.

his Royal Highness manifested so much anxiety, and made such frequent morning visits on horseback to Wimbledon, where she repaired for a short time, as to give umbrage to her brother, Lord Spencer, and even it was supposed to excite some emotion in the phlegmatic bosom of the Duke, her husband. Mrs. Fitzherbert, destined to supersede all former impressions in the Prince's heart and to assume a new place in his affections, had not yet in the beginning of 1784 publicly appeared upon the scene.

A youth adorned with so many gifts of nature, possessing a highly graceful person, captivating address, a most cultivated mind, expanded by a knowledge of the world and of men, to which his father, secluded from his subjects, had never obtained, commencing his brilliant career nearly at the moment when the American war being terminated, peace brought back public prosperity, might justly give rise to the most sanguine predictions of his future reign. He was, indeed, depicted by the Opposition as another Marcellus. Had he been snatched away like that favourite of the Roman people, or like his own daughter, the Princess Charlotte, in the bloom of opening expectation, his death might have excited general regret. He might even have been ranked among those princes embalmed in the fond admiration of posterity, whose anticipated virtues would, as we assume, have diffused felicity, if Providence had granted them a more extended date. But the Prince of Wales has in a great measure accomplished his destiny, and stands before us confessed on every point of his character. To him we cannot attribute, as we may to Edward VI., to Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of James I., or to William, Duke of Gloucester, younger brother of Charles and James II., imaginary qualities which might never have been realised in after life. He has ac-

tually reigned under the title of Regent, exercising every power vested by the British constitution in the sovereign during several years. Titus Vespasian, whose name inspires sentiments of affectionate veneration at the distance of near eighteen centuries, did not govern the Roman world during half as long a period, and Nerva survived his elevation to the imperial dignity scarcely twenty months, yet we are at no loss to decide on their respective merits as emperors. It is not necessary to sway the sceptre for sixty years, like Louis XIV., in order to be duly appreciated by our own contemporaries and by posterity. James II., who could not maintain himself four winters on the throne of England, yet will be transmitted to future times in colours as indelible and as just as Elizabeth, who governed us above four-and-forty years.

The vital defect of the Prince's character is a relaxation of high moral principle. In this point of view he stands strongly opposed to the King, his father, whose severe rectitude was admitted even by his enemies, and who balanced in some measure the greatest errors or misfortunes of his reign by the assumed or acknowledged purity of his intentions. If we would seek for proofs of the Prince's relaxed morality, they are to be found in almost all the events or acts of his life. In the early selection of a Catholic for the object of his affection, which he attempted to cover with the attributes of a legitimate union, in defiance of the laws and of the public condemnation, loudly pronounced. Had that undefined and most imprudent connection been productive of issue, to what calamities might it not have given birth? Nor did he, in my opinion, trespass less against every sentiment of filial piety by his conduct during the first great malady of his father in 1788, when the nature of that malady,

which produced a temporary privation of reason, seemed to demand the utmost moderation, forbearance, and delicacy on the part of the heir to the throne. That the nation at large so thought, and censured his impatience for obtaining possession of power, cannot be disputed. In the accumulation of a vast debt, caused by reckless profusion, aggravated by excesses of every kind in the gratification of appetite, as well as in the capricious taste for expensive furniture, or amusements and exhibitions of royal pomp, he has exposed himself to the severest animadversion. Not only has his palace been dishonoured by legal executions on the part of his creditors, some of them have even appealed to the public against him in printed addresses calculated to vilify and to degrade his character. In consequence of the pressure of his domestic embarrassments and distress, we have beheld a Prince of Wales, on whom Parliament has bestowed ample means of maintaining his state, reduced to dismiss his household, and during many years leading the life of a private individual. His treatment of the Princess his wife completed the ruin of his reputation. That the selection of Caroline of Brunswick for the partner of his bed was a most injudicious act we must admit; but the compassion excited in a generous nation towards a female and a stranger, driven by unworthy proceedings from the shelter of Carlton House, virtually repudiated, exiled to Blackheath, precluded from appearing at St. James's, and persecuted or accused by her natural protector—these circumstances have almost obliterated any deviations from prudence or decorum which she may have committed, while they have conduced to point the public condemnation against the primary author of her misfortunes. Charles II., though a most profligate and unprincipled prince, and though

he committed every kind of infidelity to his Queen, yet never treated her with cruelty or indignity.

In his own family and among his immediate ancestors the Prince might indeed have found a precedent for severe usage of a wife in the person of Sophia of Zell, who, after a formal sentence of separation from her husband, was confined during near forty years by George I. But public opinion, more powerful in the present age and over the British people than at the close of the seventeenth century in Westphalia, would not have permitted the Regent to oppress his consort, or to select her as a victim of his resentment and detestation, however much we must condemn many parts of her conduct.

Since I wrote these lines, we have witnessed the trial of that most unfortunate and persecuted woman, a scene of such vindictive atrocity as no civilised age can parallel. That George IV. should have authorised it will not surprise those who have studied his principles of action. But how shall we speak of the Ministers who, in order to gratify him, lent their sanction to such a proceeding, procured or rather suborned such witnesses, collected from the dregs of Italy, and made such disclosures? Posterity will inflict on them the merited punishment of their unworthy subservience, which is not exceeded by any similar act of political degradation under the Stuart reigns. What part of Laud's conduct calls for such moral censure as Sutton's compliance? Unfortunately it was Wake, not Tillotson, that the present Archbishop seems to have emulated when he consented to strike the Queen's name out of the Liturgy. Could Clifford or Jeffreys have manifested more servile devotion to Charles and James II. than Londonderry, Liverpool, and Eldon have shown to their sovereign, or have more completely sacrificed not only justice, but common

humanity to court favour? Before the day on which the present Memoirs shall see the light, whatever difference of sentiment may prevail relative to the Queen's guilt or innocence, there will only be one opinion entertained respecting that transaction.

If the instances here enumerated may be considered as proofs of defective morality, they will probably appear not less convincing attestations to his want of a sound understanding. How could the heir-apparent more strongly prove to his future subjects the want of all discretion on his part, and a deficiency in the most essential qualities of a sovereign, than by trampling on national prejudices or laws, and by violating the most sacred duties. Nor did he, like more artful princes, affect to draw a veil over his acts of imprudence and error; never was any man less attentive to conceal his vices from general observation. Yet one exception it would be unjust to omit when reviewing his political conduct, I mean in the maintenance of those Ministers and the support of those measures which his father had adopted previous to his final loss of reason. By this salutary sacrifice of his early predilections, and by continuing in office the men whom the King had selected for his own confidential servants, he may be said to have in some measure redeemed his character. George III., if he could have been conscious of the fact, might from the recesses of Windsor Castle have addressed his son, when about to assume the full powers of Regent early in 1812, as Henry IV. does the Prince of Wales—

“A hundred thousand rebels die in this;”  
Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.”

If we consider the prostrate condition of Europe at the time when the restrictions on the Regent were withdrawn, nearly about the moment when the

Corsican Emperor, having subjected almost the whole Continent to his dominion, prepared to invade the Russian territory, and if we further reflect how deep a wound the great cause of emancipating Europe must have sustained at so critical a period had the new sovereign commenced his regency by the dismissal of a Ministry which ever systematically opposed Napoleon's progress, we shall then be enabled fully to appreciate the merit of his conduct. It does, in fact, greatly palliate a long series of errors and deficiencies. Such will probably be the decision of future times ; nor can I be suspected, in anticipating that sentence, of feeling any partiality towards an Administration from whom individually I have received only injury. From the instant that I commenced these Memoirs I have deposited my enmities no less than my preferences at the altar of impartial truth.

No part of the Prince's conduct has exposed him to greater inconvenience or subjected him to more severity of animadversion than his profusion. We may indeed generally consider economy as the indelible characteristic of superior sovereigns. Elizabeth among us, Henry IV. of France, and Frederick II. of Prussia in our own time, have all been frugal monarchs. George III., however severe an empire he exercised over his appetites and desires, yet, it must be owned, was not an economist ; but even his failings were either venial or in some measure allied to utility. His expenses throughout his whole life ran principally in three channels. During the first ten or twelve years of his reign mechanics seemed to constitute his favourite pursuit. Satire, sustained by poetry, levelled some of its severest shafts at this gratification, which procured him the name of the "button-making King," as Charles II. is denominated by Lord Rochester the "mutton-



eating King." Pinchbeck's interviews with the sovereign and his frequent visits to the Queen's House were made the subject of ludicrous exhibition. A passion for gardening or horticulture succeeded to mechanics, and here again the muse selected him for animadversion. We cannot peruse, even at this distance of time, the "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers" without admiring the delicacy of its wit, and the lancet-like irony with which it exposes the Asiatic taste displayed in Chambers's most absurd dissertation on "Oriental Gardening." As the King advanced in life agriculture and architecture supplanted both the former pursuits. His agricultural experiments must be considered as very beneficial in their tendency. Contemplated in his architectural capacity, his Majesty may perhaps not wholly escape censure, or at least ridicule. His construction of the Queen's Lodge at Windsor, where he held his residence during so many summers, could not pass unnoticed by the authors of the "Probationary Odes," who, parodying "Alexander's Feast," thus describe him—

"Mighty sovereign, mighty master !  
 George is content with lath and plaster !  
 At his own palace gate,  
 In a poor porter's lodge, by Chambers planned,  
 See him with Jenky, hand in hand,  
 In serious mood,  
 Talking ! talking ! talking ! talking !  
 All for his country's good."

But the most singular monument of eccentricity and expense constructed by George III. during the course of half a century is the castle in Kew Gardens. Its position, opposite to the smoky and dusky town of Brentford, one of the most detestable places in the vicinity of London, only separated by the stream of the Thames, is very unkingly as well as

incommodious. Though still unfinished, unfurnished, and uninhabited, as it will probably ever remain, it presents to the eye an assemblage of towers and turrets, forming a structure such as those in which Ariosto or Spenser depict captive princesses detained by giants or enchanters. Perhaps in no act of his life has a more disordered mind been exhibited by the King than in the erection of such a building.<sup>1</sup> If not destroyed or demolished, it will present to posterity the image of distempered reason exercising its powers without control, sustained by pecuniary resources of no ordinary description. The Prince of Wales's profuse expenses could neither be imputed to insanity, nor did they bear the impression of beneficence, nor were they productive of national advantage; they were mere gratifications of caprice, luxury, and appetite. Entertainments prolonged throughout the night, banquets, where epicurism exhausted its powers, commonly terminated in excess; furniture of the most costly and voluptuous description, often procured from the extremities of Asia at any price, these have always constituted his favourite objects of enjoyment. It must be acknowledged that we trace in them nothing elevated, nothing that reminds us of Augustus, or of Trajan; it will be fortunate if the ideas of Claudius or of Vitellius do not present themselves to our recollection. In his love of building alone he seemed to prove himself the son of George III. Carlton House, as well as the Pavilion at Brighton, which satire has named the Kremlin, may emulate Windsor or Kew in the enormous sums that have been expended on their respective embellishment.

Besides the want of principle, judgment, and economy must be noticed another defect which

<sup>1</sup> This palace remained for some years in an unfinished condition, and was taken down in 1828.—ED.

arose out of the levity of his character—I mean unsteadiness and inconsistency: it was easy to make an impression on his understanding, but difficult to regulate his conduct; the acuteness of his perception enabled him to appreciate sound advice, and the suavity of his temper induced him to support remonstrance; but though he was convinced by argument, or might design to act in consequence of that conviction, yet the facility of his nature, his habitual loquacity, and the want of command over himself usually overturned the best concocted plans for his guidance. Those persons who left him deeply impressed and fully determined over-night were surprised to find the edifice which they had constructed, and which they fondly imagined to be so solid, completely vanished on the subsequent morning. He was, in fact, more formed to captivate than to retain his adherents; they knew and dreaded the mobility of his disposition. But in no acts of his whole life has he more violently shocked that public opinion which is the surest support of thrones than in the selection of his intimate companions. I do not thus designate Lord Hastings, or Fox, or Sheridan, or Erskine, or Grey; they were his political friends, councillors, and advisers. I mean those associates of his pleasures whom Lord Thurlow characterised by one of the coarsest but most expressive words in the English language. The Prince having sent a message to that distinguished nobleman, who was then confined with the gout at Brighton, and whose temper, not naturally the sweetest, had been sharpened by pain, to signify the intention of calling upon him in the course of the same morning. “Say to his Royal Highness,” answered Thurlow, with his characteristic severity, “that I shall be honoured by his visit; and you may add that I hope, whenever he comes, he will leave his *scum*

behind him." The poignancy of the expression was heightened by its being addressed to one of those individuals whose name I forbear to mention, but whom it might be supposed he meant particularly to allude to in the prohibition. Among the persons frequently admitted to the orgies celebrated in Pall Mall were many of a description such as Falstaff might have chosen for his parties in Eastcheap. A Jew named Travis, who I believe still survives, enjoyed during a considerable time a high place in the royal favour. O'Byrne, a native of Ireland, whose accent most eloquently announced the country from which he came, attained to equal eminence. Peto and Pains could scarcely have been more improper associates for the son of Henry IV. than were such men to be the favoured inmates of Carlton House. I knew O'Byrne, and have more than once dined in his company. Without talents, morals, connections, rank, or education, he contrived to attain a certain degree of celebrity, acquired a very considerable fortune, entertained with splendour profusion, and was received among persons of the highest rank, who even courted his society. He was accustomed to tell the Prince of Wales many bold as well as unpalatable truths; nor ought it to be unnoticed to his Royal Highness's honour that he no more seemed to resent these freedoms in O'Byrne than the sarcasms of Falstaff are resented by the son of Henry IV. Nature had bestowed on O'Byrne an advantageous person, with features unembarrassed by modesty, and no cardinal ever possessed a more distinguishing palate in meats or wines. He played very successfully at almost every game, and in 1781 he won at a single sitting at the Cocoa Tree in Pall Mall £10,000 from Admiral Eliab Hervey, then a lieutenant in the navy. O'Byrne had gained off him an infinitely larger sum, but conscious that

the magnitude of the acquisition would prevent his realising it, he wisely permitted his antagonist to recover all except the original money; this able manœuvre was classically denominated the "Retreat of the Ten Thousand." He not long afterwards rose winner of a similar sum from the late Duke of Rutland, for which, as immediate payment was not perfectly convenient to the loser, O'Byrne consented to take an annuity of £1000 a year for life, secured on the Duke's estate. Though O'Byrne's understanding was uncultivated, his conversation was original and entertaining; he had mixed much in the world, and knew the value attached to a delicately served table. His Royal Highness, who was never insensible to the last-mentioned merit, condescended frequently to dine with O'Byrne at his own house. As a peculiar mark of personal favour, he even permitted his Irish friend to wear the uniform reserved for his own family and intimate connections. In this distinguished dress O'Byrne was presented to Buonaparte, then First Consul, during one of his levées held at Paris in 1802. The Corsican, who at times, as I well know, paid an assiduous court to the heir-apparent through the medium of the French Minister, Otto, treated O'Byrne with extraordinary marks of distinction, a circumstance which, when related afterwards, did not, however, much gratify or please the Prince. I have already mentioned O'Byrne's skill in the science of cookery or gastronomy; he lived in very familiar habits with the late Duke of Orleans, too well known by the part which he took in the French Revolution. As O'Byrne passed much of his time in the capital of France between 1782 and 1788, he frequently dined with the Duke, either at the Palais Royal or at the voluptuous retreat at Monceaux, without the barrier of Paris. O'Byrne told me that dining at the latter

place in a select company where a superb repast was served, all the guests vied in their encomiums on the delicacy with which the dishes were prepared. "Monseigneur, vous êtes bien servi," said they; "on ne peut rien goûter de mieux apprêté." The Marquis de Sillery, one of them, and he only, dissented from the general opinion. "Non, monseigneur," said he, "vous êtes mal servi; vous ne savez pas vivre; je vous donnerai à manger, et à toute cette compagnie; alors, vous verrez, messieurs, ce que c'est que d'être servi comme il faut." "We all stared at each other," added O'Byrne, "but a day was named, and the company met. Never did I taste such cookery. Only two dishes were ever placed on the table at the same time; they were, however, exquisite. We sat down at three o'clock and continued eating till nine. Every individual present admitted that Sillery had made good his promise and outdone the Duke of Orleans."

We cannot wonder that the Prince of Wales, while young, should have so ill chosen his companions, when we still behold him, though entering on the confines of old age, surrounded with men whose names and titles will no more be consecrated in the British annals than were those of Sporus or of Narcissus in ancient Rome. The Headforts, the Yarmouths, the Barrymores, and the Bradshaws are principally or solely commemorated in the records of licentious pleasure. They have been supplanted by a London Alderman,<sup>1</sup> only famous at City feasts; yet amidst a list so little formed to elevate the mind or to improve the character, some pleasing exceptions present themselves when reviewing the Prince's life. Colonel St. Leger, one of the earliest favourites, joined to a most engaging

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Curtis, banker, of Lombard Street, Lord Mayor in 1795. The Prince Regent offered him a peerage in 1818, but in place of that gave him his portrait by Lawrence. The alderman died in 1829.—ED.

figure and manners many amiable personal qualities. The late Lord Lake,<sup>1</sup> whose military talents and services in Asia deservedly raised him to the peerage, occupied, like St. Leger, a distinguished situation in the Prince's family from its first formation. I very particularly knew Admiral Payne, who was one of the most honest and honourable men of his time. He enjoyed during many years his Royal Highness's favour, though he afterwards suffered a long eclipse, and was banished from Carlton House; yet to the honour of the heir-apparent, having recognised his error, he fully restored Payne to the place that he had previously held. The name of Lord Moira, recently raised to the dignity of Marquis of Hastings—the Timon of the present age—whose chivalrous spirit, impelled by a munificent temper, has completely exhausted a splendid fortune; these selections would do honour to the choice of any prince. The last-mentioned nobleman, sprung from the Plantagenets, but adorned with qualities of mind far more brilliant than his descent, however illustrious, and who at this hour presides over the immense empire subjected to England in the East, was early chosen by his Royal Highness for his friend and companion. Unfortunately it was not from him that the lessons or the example of frugality could be either inculcated or exhibited. Donnington Castle,<sup>2</sup> like Carlton House, has experienced the calamities resulting from profusion.

Perhaps after thus reviewing the character of the elevated individual who actually sways the sceptre, and reflecting on the contradictions and inconsisten-

<sup>1</sup> General Gerard Lake, created Baron Lake in 1804 and Viscount Lake in 1807, born 27th July 1744. Took Agra 17th October 1803; defeated the Mahrattas near Delhi and restored the Mogul 1st November 1803; defeated Holkar at Furruckabad 17th November 1804; took Bhurtpore 2d April 1805; died 20th February 1808.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> In Leicestershire.—ED.

cies that meet in his composition, we may find some analogy between him and the Emperor Gallienus. Gibbon, when delineating that feeble successor of Augustus, says, "It is difficult to paint the light, the various, the inconstant character of Gallienus. . . In every art that he attempted his lively genius enabled him to succeed, and as his genius was destitute of judgment, he attempted every art except the important ones of war and government. He was a master of several curious but useful sciences, a ready orator, and an elegant poet, a skilful gardener, an excellent cook, and a most contemptible prince." Even those persons who may not willingly recognise the similarity between the son of Valerian and the English Regent, or who may incline to consider the comparison as too severe on the latter, yet will probably admit that it would have been a national misfortune of no common magnitude if he had ascended the throne at the same period of life when his father succeeded to the crown. Contemplating such an impending event, just at the conclusion of the American war, when we were sunk as a nation in the eyes of Europe, and involved in financial distress, demanding economy in every department, George III. might well have exclaimed, like his predecessor—

"Oh! my poor country, sick with civil blows!  
When that my care could not withhold thy riots,  
What wilt thou do when riot is thy care?"

I have frequently been tempted to think, when revolving the transactions of the Regency, that Providence, in withdrawing the sovereign mentally from the scene, while he remains personally among us, and by that act leaving the throne vacant, without its being nevertheless possible to ascertain his inability at some future time to resume the kingly power, has facilitated the great work of overturning



the colossal despotism under which Europe groaned, and which menaced finally to subvert or to convulse these islands. Had the King been at once removed by death in 1810, his successor probably or certainly would have called to his counsels those men for whom he had always manifested the most decided predilection ; but as the privation of intellect which his Majesty experienced in the autumn of that year might have proved only temporary, and might, like preceding attacks of the same nature, have yielded for a time to medical skill, restrictions were wisely and happily imposed on his representative, who thus found himself under a sort of necessity to continue the same functionaries in employment. When the restrictions ceased he retained them from inclination and reflection. If Lord Grenville and Lord Grey had then been invested with powers, we may reasonably doubt whether Napoleon would have been now confined on a rock in the Ethiopic Ocean, while Louis XVIII. reigns in France. Even the vices of the Regent's character have been checked or restrained by the delegated as well as precarious nature of his authority, which, though supreme, is not regal, nor invested with the name, insignia, and majesty of the kingly office. From his apartments in Windsor Castle, deprived of sight and of intellect, the existence of George III., at near fourscore, may nevertheless be said to diffuse a salutary influence over the conduct and the measures of his son.

#### THE PRINCESS AMELIA.

[*October 1786.*] England then exhibited a scene of such tranquillity, that the month of October would offer no public event meriting commemoration, if the death of the Princess Amelia did not

claim notice. Second in order of birth of George II.'s five daughters, she attained nearly to her father's age, being in her seventy-sixth year at the time of her decease. Her four sisters, of whom three had married foreign princes, being all dead, she remained sole survivor near the King's person, and possessed a high place in his affections. "Send for Amelia," were among the few words that he is said to have articulated subsequent to the apoplectic attack which carried him off on the 26th October 1760. Her hand would unquestionably have been bestowed on the "great Frederick," then Prince Royal of Prussia, if the inveterate enmity subsisting between their respective fathers, George II. and Frederick William I., had not prevented the accomplishment of their union. The Princess Amelia, though neither endowed with beauty nor with talents, wanted not estimable qualities. She divided her time principally between London and her villa at Gunnersbury, occasionally visiting Bath, and residing in Cavendish Square when she inhabited the metropolis. During many years the King, her nephew, and the Queen were known to have treated her with little attention, and she never appeared at St. James's; but in the autumn of 1783, when her Majesty lay-in of her youngest daughter, they made advances to the Princess Amelia. The new-born infant was called after her, and as she stood sponsor, it was hoped that she might consider the child as her heir, an expectation in which they were egregiously deceived. No doubt existed of her possessing large personal property, and the marks of regard shown her by their Majesties were generally placed to that account. The Prince of Wales, to whom, embarrassed as he was in his finances, a legacy would have been very convenient, paid her likewise an assiduous court; but as he made her

a frequent object of ridicule in private society by mimicking her German accent, it was believed that the circumstance reaching her ears, she duly appreciated the motive and object of his respect. By her testamentary dispositions she completely excluded the royal family of England from any the smallest part of her possessions, leaving the whole to her three nephews, the sons of her youngest sister, Mary, who had married Frederick II., Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. The sum thus transferred to a foreign house exceeded £100,000. It is a fact that £40,000 of it had been bequeathed to her by her brother, William, Duke of Cumberland, being a play debt due to him from an Irish Marquis, won at the gaming-table, and which was paid over to the Princess Amelia after the Duke's decease. The nobleman who thus enriched the princes of Hesse still survives in Ireland at near ninety.

#### MRS. FITZHERBERT AND THE PRINCE OF WALES.

[*January 1787.*] During the first days of January I amused myself with writing "A Short Review of the Political State of Great Britain at the Commencement of 1787." Of the Prince of Wales I spoke with due admiration, when describing the graces of his figure, manner, conversation, and deportment, all of them formed to captivate mankind, but with becoming severity of his want of submission to his father, the choice of his companions, his habitual profusion as well as excesses,<sup>1</sup> and above all his ambiguous connection with Mrs.

<sup>1</sup> The commencement of this chapter is a repetition of that which appears before (see Vol. iv. p. 372), but as it is necessary for the understanding of what follows it is left here.—ED.

Fitzherbert. Notwithstanding the reluctance that I feel to quote from one of my own productions, yet it is necessary that I should here subjoin the passage in question. Its perusal will at least prove that I have been consistent in my opinions, and that I thought of the Prince of Wales in 1787 nearly as I think of the Prince Regent in 1819, and of George IV. in 1821. After stating that he had contrived to shake the affections, and to diminish, if not to forfeit the respect almost inseparable from his person and dignity, the work thus proceeded :—"It is an invidious, but it may be to future times a useful task to explain how a Prince of Wales may degrade himself in the eyes of a discerning, a loyal, but an impartial people. He may lay the foundation of this melancholy proof of his power by a departure from that sacred and primeval law written by the finger of nature deep in the human heart, of filial piety and obedience, a duty as inviolable and as much exacted from the prince to the sovereign as from the least and lowest peasant to his parent ; a virtue ever found to exist with most force and energy in those bosoms where nature has implanted all the most benign and kindly affections. He may accomplish it by forming his nearest connections of familiarity and intimacy, not from among the youth who naturally surround the successor to the throne, but from the most obscure and unprincipled individuals with which a capital such as this must of necessity teem. He may give the final wound to his popularity by forming a connection of so ambiguous, so enigmatical, and so undefined a nature, that mankind with anxious but tearful eyes shall tremble to explore what yet they desire to ascertain ; and if this extraordinary and nameless union should be formed with a person of a religious persuasion different from that of the country in which so strange a scene is

acted, it is only to contempt and ridicule that he can fly to avoid general disapprobation and resentment. These, I had almost said only these, are the means by which a Prince of Wales can descend from the proud eminence on which he can compel a reluctant people to deprecate his reign, and to anticipate with terror that event, to which they are usually too prone to look with warm and pleasing expectation."

[*May* 1787.] The Prince of Wales had succeeded in his object, namely, compelling his father to come forward for his pecuniary accommodation. But in order to effect that point, he had been necessitated to disown Mrs. Fitzherbert, whose character became the sacrifice to his embarrassments. If after having for a considerable time enjoyed the honours of a wife in society, she should henceforward sink to the level of a mistress like the Duchess of Kendal or the Countess of Yarmouth under George I. and II., her lover might be accused of bartering honour for gold. Yet how extricate himself and her from so painful a dilemma? . . . For how, it might naturally be asked, could the panegyric recently delivered (by Sheridan) be with propriety applied to a woman living, as Mrs. Fitzherbert did, in a "state of intimate avowed union with the Prince of Wales"? If "her character as well as her conduct entitled her to general respect," she must be, not his mistress, but his wife; the inference seemed unavoidable. Fortunately no attempt was made to probe this tender subject; neither Pitt, nor Rolle, nor any other member present, hazarded a comment on it; thus permitting the veil which Fox had rent to be replaced by Sheridan. In the same anomalous state Mrs. Fitzherbert remained during near eight years, down to 1795, when the injudicious, ill-assorted marriage of

the heir-apparent with Caroline of Brunswick-Wolfenbützel altogether dissolved the charm. But till that ceremony had taken place, notwithstanding Fox's positive declaration, she maintained a species of conjugal rank in society and in general estimation. I know that Dr. Moore, then Archbishop of Canterbury, when reading the matrimonial service at the Chapel Royal, gave unequivocal proofs of his apprehension lest some engagement of a moral or religious nature antecedently contracted by the Prince might form a bar to the union which he was about to celebrate. For when he came to the words relative to "any person knowing of a lawful impediment," he laid down the book and looked earnestly for a second or two at the King, as well as at the royal bridegroom. The latter was much affected and shed tears. Not content with this tacit allusion to the report, the Archbishop twice repeated the passage, in which the Prince engages to live from that time in nuptial fidelity with his consort. The last-mentioned fact I received from the Duke and Duchess of Dorset only three days after the marriage was performed. They were both present at its celebration; so was the Duchess Dowager of Rutland, who is my authority at second-hand for the former anecdote.

The Prince, however graceful, amiable, and accomplished he was in his person as well as in his mind and manners, had forfeited in some measure the general esteem. His excesses, his profusion, his selection of companions, his disregard of public opinion, lastly, his undefined connection with a lady who, however highly respectable in herself, could never be associated to the crown, yet over which connection a mysterious mantle of conjugal solemnity was thrown, this combination of errors or faults operated to his inconceivable prejudice. Fox

laboured under equal or greater disabilities; the Coalition and the East India Bill.

An heir-apparent who had joined to a strong understanding high principles of action, animated by an ardent desire of preserving the public tranquillity at a moment when a cloud overshadowed the throne, would beyond all doubt have thus addressed his father's Minister :—" Providence has afflicted our sovereign with a privation of reason ; I trust it will be speedily restored ; while, however, the event remains uncertain, and until the probable duration or termination of the malady shall be better ascertained, if Parliament should confer on me the Regency, I shall not touch a single string belonging to the frame of the actual Government. If his Majesty is given back to us, he shall find everything as he left it ; but should the result prove otherwise, my decided intentions are to confer on those persons in whose talents, integrity, and personal attachment I repose full confidence the power of the state. Meanwhile be assured of my sincere support." A Prince of Wales who should have so spoken and so acted would have acquired universal approbation. He would have silenced faction while he coerced the existing Administration, and the Regency would have been delegated to him rather by acclamation than by vote. Unhappily, so elevated a line of conduct was neither dictated to him by his own mind nor recommended to his adoption by the individuals about his person ; they dreaded his coming into contact with a Minister whose facility and rapidity in business must have powerfully impressed the Prince ; they preferred seizing on the Government, regardless of public opinion, and trusting to the permanent duration of his Majesty's malady.

[19th February 1789.] " Although regencies," said

Lord Stormont in the debate on the Regency Bill, "are expedients required by necessity under peculiar circumstances or exigencies, yet every man must feel how great is the calamity of their existence. With respect to the present Regency Bill, I consider it as an aggravation of our national misfortunes. I rejoice therefore, personally, if I should be delivered from the severe duty which the urgent nature of the case, and that motive alone, could have induced me to undertake. Yet even under the embarrassing restrictions imposed, I am convinced that the Prince of Wales would have exhibited an earnest of that wisdom and exertion which may be expected from him when in the course of nature he shall ascend the throne. My eyes, it is reasonable to suppose, will be closed long before that day arrives, but there are Lords now present who may live to witness it. They, I have no doubt, will experience the benefit, and will acknowledge the truth of my prediction." We must candidly admit that during eight or nine years the Regent's Administration did not in any degree disgrace Lord Stormont's augury. But what sentence will posterity pass upon the King for his treatment of the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick from the instant of his ascending the throne?

#### THE DUKE OF YORK.

[1787.] About this time the Duke of York returned to London, after a residence of several years on the Continent, principally at Hanover. He had just completed his twenty-fourth year, and bore a strong resemblance to his father in countenance. His face, though in general somewhat suffused, might then have been esteemed almost handsome,



and his features were much more pronounced than those of his elder brother, whose nose seemed half concealed in the rotundity of his cheeks. The Duke's manners, shy and embarrassed, formed a contrast to the gracious and noble yet familiar address of the Prince of Wales; but the Duke, nevertheless, maintained even in these hours of relaxation, some control over himself, and was not commonly betrayed by intoxication into unbecoming disclosures. A deference for public opinion pervaded his most unguarded moments. His courage was indisputable, and however wholly destitute of military talent, he exhibited great military ardour, united with a warm predilection for the profession of a soldier. It was well known that the King destined him to be placed at the head of the army as soon as his age should qualify him for so important a post. George II. had, in like manner, made his second son, William, Commander-in-Chief.<sup>1</sup>

Frederick, it must be admitted, was very inferior to his elder brother in every species of elegant knowledge or of ornamental accomplishment. He seldom cultivated his mind by the perusal of ancient or of modern compositions. During his stay at Hanover his early studies had become obliterated, and he could no longer read even a Roman writer in the original when he revisited England. To the attractions of the other sex he was not insensible, but a rage for play absorbed every other passion in his bosom; Charles Fox scarcely exceeded him in his devotion to faro. George III., who always felt a strong predilection for his second son, exhibited many proofs of it; but in no instance did it appear more conspicuous than in attention to his pecuniary interests. While the King expended for his own purposes all the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cumberland.—ED.

during the Prince of Wales's minority, and refused to give any account of the manner in which they had been alienated, he acted very differently by Frederick. The sums reserved from the revenues of the Bishopric of Osnaburg having accumulated to a large amount, were, by his Majesty's direction, applied towards the purchase of Allerton Mauleverer, a valuable landed property, situated in the West Riding of Yorkshire, not far from Knaresborough. This fine estate the Duke lost at play within a few weeks after he came into its possession. The same ruinous propensity has accompanied him through life, and has never ceased to exercise a dominion over him.

At the present time, when he rapidly approaches the close of his fifty-seventh year, he rarely passes any evening without sitting at cards. He plays ill, exclaims against his bad luck when he loses, and exhibits in his countenance a picture of his fortune. But it is at the Duke of Rutland's seat at Cheveley in Cambridgeshire that he particularly indulges this passion, during his frequent excursions to Newmarket. There is at Cheveley a very long apartment having in it two fireplaces; the Duchess of Rutland and her party occupy one extremity; at the other the Dukes of York and Rutland invariably engage in whist, they playing, staking, and betting against each other. Seven or eight hundred pounds are often lost or won in the course of a night; but his Royal Highness owes at this time (in May 1820) above two thousand pounds to the noble proprietor of Cheveley, who is an over-match for the Commander-in-Chief, and never allows his cards to be discovered in his features. That gaming is not the only weakness, or rather vice, which has exposed the Duke of York to national condemnation is sufficiently attested by the name, become

historical, of Mary Ann Clarke.<sup>1</sup> With a splendid income, the Duke is, and will ever remain, penniless. Oatlands has followed the fate of Allerton Mauleverer, and, like the youngest son of Henry II., he may be denominated Lackland; his name is, nevertheless, cherished by the army.

<sup>1</sup> The inquiry into the conduct of the Duke of York took place in 1809.—ED.





## APPENDIX.

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### *LETTERS AND PAPERS RESPECTING THE QUEEN OF DENMARK.*

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FROM THE BARON DE SECKENDORF.

No. I.

UN mot pour vous, mon très-cher. Tout va bien : on espère même que la Princesse<sup>1</sup> se retirera à neuf heures, alors Sa Maj<sup>é</sup><sup>2</sup> pourra vous parler jusqu'à 11 heures à son aise. Vous pouvés lui dire tout ce que vous avés sur le cœur. Le mauvais tems m'annonce l'impossibilité de me trouver demain matin au rendésvous : ainsi, ayés la grace, étant d'ailleurs destiné d'être mouillé, de passer à huit heures chés moi. Ordonnés les chevaux à neuf, et partés sous la garde de Dieu. Bon soir.

Je retourne le chiffre, dont j'ai pris copie. Rapportés-

<sup>1</sup> Héréditaire de Brunswic.

<sup>2</sup> La Reine de Dannemarc, Caroline Mat.lde.

moi demain tout ce que vous avés encore de papiers ou d'ailleurs.

Vous verrés la Reine précisément à neuf heures.

BARON DE S—F.

Z—ll, 24 Mars, 1775.

No. II.

MON TRÈS-CHER AMI,—La mort également douloureuse et rapide de mon incomparable maîtresse renverse tout d'un coup l'édifice de notre prospérité. Que nous sommes malheureux, et que sa perte est grande pour nos amis ! Lepy a été incessamment informé par moi de cette triste catastrophe. Le paquet dont se trouvoit chargé le courrier a été renvoyé sans être décacheté au S<sup>r</sup> Abel par Alis, et j'ignore entièrement ce qu'auroit été la résolution qu'il comptoit donner aux amis de Montpellier.

Alis m'a promis de faire en sorte que toutes les dépenses faites par eux et par vous seroient remboursées par Abel le plus tôt que possible ; et sitôt que j'ai des nouvelles sûres à cet égard, vous en serés instruit. En attendant, je vous prie de dire ceci à Lepy. Il est juste que personne perde son argent.

Que deviendrons-nous à cette heure, mon très-cher ami ? Resterés-vous à Londres, ou ferés-vous le voyage que vos parens avoient projeté ? Puis-je me flatter de vous revoir jamais ? Grand Dieu, quelle désolation en si peu de momens ! Je ne pourrai jamais me remettre de ce coup. Votre dernière lettre parvint encore à la chère défunte.

Adieu, mon très-cher ami. Je ne cesserai de ma vie de vous aimer, et de conserver la mémoire de votre attachement sincère pour la précieuse Agujari.

Ce 16 May 75.

Tout à vous.

BROCARD.

From Zell. From the Baron de  
S—k—f, immediately after  
her Majesty's death.

N. W. W. Jr.

## No. III.

VOTRE bien bonne et aimable lettre du mois passé est entre mes mains, et j'ose vous dire qu'elle m'a été dans mes amertumes actuelles d'une d'autant plus grande consolation, que je sais quelle est l'honnêteté de votre ame et la candeur de votre façon de penser. L'incluse a été non seulement remise d'abord à Alis, qui, pour plus de sûreté, ne vous fera réponse qu'avec le courier ordinaire d'Hanovre; mais je tiens sa promesse sacrée, de s'intéresser vivement pour vous auprès le S<sup>r</sup> Abel: il faut absolument que celui-ci aye soin d'un serviteur si zélé de sa sœur, qui, de son vivant, étoit si fort éloigné de tout ce qui s'appelle intérêt ou récompense. Et d'ailleurs, Lepy et ses consortes renoncent et refusent restitution des fraix quelconques; ils n'exigent que de vous voir placé. Comment le seriez-vous, mon très-cher et digne ami, selon vos vœux? Ayés la confiance en moi de me le dire. Apparemment c'est à Londres même, dans quelque bureau d'un secrétaire d'état? Car pour être employé dans les pays étrangers, il faut, je crois, savoir beaucoup de langues étrangères. Vous continuerez de m'adresser vos nouvelles à Zelle; car tant que le Roi ne se déclare pas sur notre sort, il faut y rester tranquillement, et cela pourroit, dit-on, bien durer encore quelques mois. Toutefois, mon cher, vous saurés dans quel trou du monde me trouver.

Comme vous me demandés quelques particularités de la mort de celle qui faisoit nos délices, et que nous ne voulons jamais cesser de pleurer amèrement, je ne saurois mieux vous en informer, que par la copie d'une lettre qui fut envoyée par une de nos dames à Copenh. quelques jours après ce décès si infortuné pour nous. Du reste, les gazettiers en Allemagne, France, et en Hollande ont parlé de ce triste évènement d'une façon très-touchante, et rendant tous les regrets et respects imaginables aux cendres de cette chère Princesse. Oh leurs ennemis, qui ne cessoient point de la persécuter, méritoient bien que le bruit de l'empoisonnement devînt plus général; car au bout du compte, c'est la douleur et leurs cabales qui l'ont tué.

Le billet cy-joint vous informera ce que les états veulent faire en honneur de sa mémoire, et vous serez aussi très-flatté de cette marque non-équivoque du zèle et de la vénération de tout un peuple. Cette annonce paroîtra dans toutes les gazettes d'Allemagne, de France, et des Pays Bas. Nous désirons, mon cher, que vous la faites traduire en bon Anglois, et ayés soin que cela soit aussi inséré en plusieurs feuilles publiques, chés vous, en Ecosse, Irlande. Quant à l'anecdote que j'ai l'honneur de vous communiquer, il n'est pas possible de la lire sans pleurer. On nous a sollicité de la publier aussi en Angleterre. Cela sera encore vous, mon bon ami, qui la fera paroître dans quelques journaux, sous titre, *Trait de Tendresse Maternelle*. Mais comment traduire bien et que le sens n'y perde rien, les quatre vers? Eh bien; je vous recommande avec instance ces deux entreprises, vous suppliant de m'en faire en tems et lieu le rapport. Marie Mancini<sup>1</sup> n'a pas été ici, ni dans la maladie, ni après la mort. Je ne la connois pas assés pour juger sa sensibilité à l'occasion d'un évènement si triste; mais si on en est susceptible, ne faut-il pas se faire le reproche d'avoir aggravé par sa conduite le poids des adversités sous lequel la chère Agujari gémissoit? Ah, mon ami, que le souvenir de sa perte me sera ineffaçable! que je crains par-là bouleverser entièrement le système de ma prospérité! La chère défunte restera enterrée à Zelle aux caveaux de Duc: c'est apparemment par une œconomie mesquine, qui se manifeste d'ailleurs en tout ce que les Excellences de ce pays font, qu'on ne veut pas la transporter à Hanovre. Savés-vous bien que les gazettes disent, qu'après que les enfans royaux étoient déjà en grand deuil, qu'on donna à Copenhague un bal à la cour. N'y a-t-il donc aucune âme honnête de gazetier à Londres, qui venge une conduite si scandaleuse?

Oh, mon ami, si j'étois susceptible de l'ombre de joie, j'en aurois eu vivement, en ouvrant le dernier paquet de livres qui furent envoyés d'Angleterre à la chérissime

<sup>1</sup> La Princesse Héréditaire de B——c, sœur de la Reine Matilde, et de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Agujari, mais qu'elle ne vit plus ; et y trouvant "Cursory Remarks made in a Tour, by N. Wra——." j'en commencerai aujourd'hui la lecture, moitié en la dévorant, parceque c'est le stil de celui que je ne finirai de ma vie à chérir. De grace n'oubliez pas à me marquer quand vous quittés l'Angleterre, et où vous allés. Je suis *usque ad cineres* entièrement le vôtre.

BROCARD.

Ce 20 Juin 75.

No. IV.

JE suis en possession, mon bon, cher et bien-aimé ami, de vos lettres du 30 Juin, 10 Juillet, et je viens recevoir celle du 21 Juillet *aujourd'hui*—jour, après celui du 10 May, un des plus malheureux, des plus tristes pour moi ; car c'est aujourd'hui que toute notre cour se sépare, que les dames partent que je suis sur le point d'aller m'enterrer à une campagne à quelques meiles d'ici pour attendre encore quelle sera ma destinée. Je comptois de-là vous répondre avec autant de circonstance que possible ; mais comme vous me dites être sur le point de votre départ, je me hâte de vous dire encore ce peu de lignes, car mes chevaux sont déjà devant la voiture. Il m'est incompréhensible, mon cher, de ce que vous n'avez point reçu par le courrier d'Hannovre les nouvelles d'Alis. Il n'y a que cinq jours qu'il fut ici, et qu'il m'assura non seulement qu'il vous avoit écrit, mais que le rapport à Abel étoit parti par la même occasion, conformément à ce que vous aviez bien voulu nous manifester de vos intentions. Il est d'ailleurs si fort homme de parole et exact, que je ne puis douter un moment que tout s'est exécuté à la ligne. Or, mon ami, s'il est possible encore, ne hâtes pas trop de quitter la patrie ; voyons du moins ce que Abel repondra à Alis ; je le saurois au retour du courrier, et je vous informerai incessamment, car je ne quitte pas encore le païs, et vous pouvés continuer à m'adresser vos lettres à Zelle ; en revanche je vous conjure de me donner une direction ultérieure où vous trouver, ou à qui de vos amis à Londres je



puis adresser mes lettres, car il me paroît absolument impossible de renoncer au commerce littéraire avec vous : mon cœur vous chérit et vous estime ; et n'avons-nous pas été liés par des nœux que ni le tems ni la vie peut dissoudre ? Tous les amis de mon incomparable Agujari me resteront éternellement en mémoire, et il n'y a que dans l'autre monde où nous serons tous ensemble heureux. Jugés par ce que je viens de vous dire, si le silence de Lepy et ses compatriotes, qui garde vis-à-vis de moi tout comme vis-à-vis de vous, ne me doit être que de plus sensible ? Encore lundi passé je lui ai écrit : je l'ai conjuré de me répondre, je me suis offert à un entrevue partout où il le souhaiteroit, mais encore point de réponse ; et cependant on n'entend pas une syllabe de quelque aventure sinistre arrivée. Cette conduite est donc pour se désespérer ; cependant nous ne voulons pas le condamner, avant que de savoir leurs raisons. Vous aurés appris peut-être qu'Abel fait administrer les biens de la chère défunte, jusqu'à ce que les enfans soyent majeurs. On dit, qu'aussitôt que l'inventaire sera fait, qu'on chargera moi de cette administration ; occupation qui me sera précieuse et chère, parceque je puis rester par-là dans une espèce de connexion avec les amis de la Agujari, et me flatter de voir, parler et connoître ses enfans. Et puis, je resterai dans ce pais-ci. Vous serés informé de tout, mon cher, pourvû que vous daignés me nommer le canal par où je vous retrouve.

L'article de la gazette a été non seulement tout à fait conforme aux vœux généraux de notre province et de votre ami en particulier, mais écrit avec une élégance, force et délicatesse Cicéronienne, qu'il a été lu, traduit, excerpté, &c. On fait imprimer à cette heure, *Les Dernières Heures* de notre chère défunte : quoique l'original est en Allemand, et qu'il sera difficile de le traduire bien dans une autre langue, je souhaiterois pourtant vous l'envoyer tel qu'il est ; faites le vous l'expliquer, et vous fondrés en larmes. En attendant, acceptés la silhouette d'une personne qui nous sera sacrée, vous la reconnoîtrés facilement ; il est triste pour nous qu'il n'en existe point de portrait. Adieu, mon cher ; je crois du moins pas avoir

manqué de répondre aux points les plus essentiels de vos chères missives. Il faut absolument que je finisse—mon cœur est navré de la plus profonde douleur, et je ne peux plus. Adieu encore une fois. Avant que de partir, votre adresse, ne l'oubliez pas.

Entièrement le vôtre,

BROCARD.

Zelle, ce 1 Août 75.

No. V.

LA vôtre du 11 Août, mon bon ami, toute chère et précieuse qu'elle m'est, parcequ'elle me vient de votre part, m'a doublement affligé et me pénètre de douleur, vû que par le voyage que vous allés entreprendre je me sens arracher vos nouvelles et les informations de votre sort, et que d'un autre côté vous me faites connoître les peu d'empressements d'Abel de vous récompenser le zèle et vos peines du tems passé. Alis, toujours coupable d'avoir négligé et oublié sa réponse qu'il vous devoit, vient pourtant m'assurer le plus légalement du monde (car je suis allé moi-même à Hannover pour le pousser et lui en faire des reproches) qu'il vous avoit recommandé par le dernier courier à son maître avec toute l'énergie possible, mais qu'il n'avoit donné aucune réplique à cet égard : il ajoute, qu'il doute qu'on fera *d'abord* quelque chose pour vous, vû qu'une grace pareille intrigueroit le public, nommement d'où elle tiroit sa source ; il espère cependant qu'avec le tems on parviendra à son but ; il m'a juré, que vous ne seriez pas oublié par lui, quand même éloigné de votre patrie. Il se peut bien que les malheureuses circonstances dans lesquelles se trouvent actuellement les choses renversent toute autre méditation, et empêchent Abel de songer aux graces et récompenses même les plus légitimement méritées ; mais toutefois la reconnaissance des grands est presque une chimère. Personne de ceux qui ont appartenus à la chère Agujari ont lieu de s'en louer : ils ne moureront pas de faim avec ce qu'on leur a assigné pour pension, mais c'est aussi tout. La pension de Brocard est des plus modiques ; on ne lui a pas même offert une place

quelquonque dans le service, et quoique on l'a à la fin chargé de l'administration dont vous êtes instruit, tout ce qu'il en a de profit, inclusivement sa pension, ne va pas au-delà de 110 guinées. Comment peut-on vivre de cela dans un poste un peu éminent ? Mais non obstant de cela il est bien aise d'en être chargé ; il obtient par-là un titre de rester dans le pays, de continuer les relations intimes avec le pauvre Lepy et ses amis abandonnés, et de se faire connoître en tems et lieu à la jeune famille. Si donc, mon digne ami, vous voulés daigner me donner quelquefois de vos nouvelles, et j'ose vous conjurer à ne me point refuser cette unique grace, adressés-les toujours à l'endroit où j'avois le bonheur de faire votre connoissance. Que ces jours me seront toujours mémorables et en même tems douloureuses ! Souvent je vous ai encore bien vivement devant mes yeux ; et le tout n'a été pourtant qu'un songe. Aussi puis-je vous assurer que la playe du malheur que j'ai reçue me fait encore sentir sa douleur comme si je n'en avois été blessé qui depuis hier, et il me semble que le tems perd son droit et ses peines avec moi.

Avés-vous à la fin reçu des nouvelles de nos amis ? Ils m'en ont donné il n'y a pas long-tems : le rideau est tombé, il s'en trouvent encore désolés. J'espère qu'on pourra arranger entre Lepy et moi un rendésvous : je languis après cette connoissance. Il ne me reste, mon très-cher et digne ami, que de vous souhaiter le voyage le plus fortuné du monde ; et de vous assurer, qu'en cas que Abel continue d'être ingrat et insensible aux récompenses qu'il vous *doit*, selon toutes les loix naturelles et positives, je ne me tranquilliserai pas, jusqu'à ce que j'aie pû en trouver ou chés lui, ou dans l'administration, ou dans la jeune famille, qui assurément sera disposée de mieux reconnoître les sacrifices qu'on a faites pour leur M \* \*.

Adieu encore une fois : il me coûte une peine infinie de m'arracher de la conversation avec vous ; mais j'espère que cela ne sera pas pour long-tems, car assurément vous voulés bien me donner de vos nouvelles et de vos addresses ultérieures.

Ce 1 Septemb. 75.

## No. VI.

POURRIÉS-VOUS bien douter un seul moment, mon bien cher et estimable ami, que je fus comblé de satisfaction et saisi de la joie la plus vive, lorsque il m'arrivoit le plaisir inattendu de votre affectueuse lettre du 18 courant ? Oh non, vous n'en doutés pas, vous me rendés pleinement justice sur l'inviolabilité et la ferveur de mes sentimens pour vous ; vous ne craignés pas, que le tems, l'éloignement et le silence affoiblira des affections qu'un tems plus heureux que celui d'à-présent contracta, et dont la base étoit zèle, respect et estime mutuelle. Recevés donc mille et mille remerciemens de ma part, d'avoir voulu incessamment après votre retour à Londres penser à moi et me gratifier de vos précieuses nouvelles. Je me hâte de vous donner les miennes par le premier courrier ; et comme je devois d'ailleurs écrire ce matin à Alis, qui se trouve depuis 4 semaines sur ses terres en Franconie (dont il ne retourne qu'au mois d'Août), j'ai saisi cette occasion pour appeller à notre secours son intercession auprès d'Abel, pour le faire réagir en votre faveur, et réassumer une affaire que votre absence a peut-être fait languir. N'importe que cela ne soit pas d'abord décidé ; à force de lever sa voix, ce que je ne cesserai jamais de faire tant que je suis entre les vivans, il viendra sûrement un tems où on récompensera un zèle, un désintérêt, un mérite semblable au vôtre. Le plaisir que votre retour aura occasionné à Fierville et consortes est assurément d'une nature qui vous flâtera, et pourra vous prouver qu'ils vous chérissent. Imagines-vous, mon ami, qu'ils se sont formés l'idée que je n'étois pas à Zell, mais chés moi en Franconie, ce qui nous empêcha de lier connoissance personnelle ; mais à l'heure qu'il est, nous sommes convenus Lepy et moi d'un rendévous, et je me flatte que cela aura lieu en peu de jours. Combien de questions fera-t-on mutuellement ! avec quel attendrissement parlera-t-on de ce que nous avons perdu et dont la perte est irréparable ! Car, mon ami, quant à moi, au lieu que le tems ait diminué ma douleur, il y a des jours où le ja sens plus vivement, dans une plus grande étendue

qu'immédiatement après le malheur que nous pleurons. Cela est, sans doute, moins étonnant, parce que je m'occupe à toute heure avec des objets qui me ramènent à ce souvenir lugubre. L'artiste Saxon a mis actuellement la main au monument que les états du Duché de Lunebourg et Zell font ériger dans le Jardin François (où jadis nous promenâmes) à la mémoire de notre chère et bonne Reine : tout l'ouvrage (qui sera d'un beau marbre blanc) ne s'achèvera qu'en deux ans d'ici ; n'importe. Le cercueil, qu'on fait en partie ici, en partie à Hannovre, sera, sans être magnifique, de toute beauté. En outre, très-cher ami, nous avons à la fin attrapé un image en cire, qui lui ressemble comme deux gouttes d'eau ; si le courrier d'Hannovre, qui va tous les quartiers à Londres, ne part pas avant que je puisse attraper une empreinte, vous aurés de ma part ce cher image, et en ferés le pendant de celui que vous avés déjà. Votre charmante, docte et instructive description du Nord a été avidement lue par toute l'Allemagne, admirée, approuvée, et nous en avons une traduction, qu'on achète partout. L'original n'a-t-il pas été aussi traduit en France ? je n'en doute pas. Toutefois, l'article de la malheureuse catastrophe de 1772 a fort estomaché la cour de Copenh . . . et j'ai entendu, sans savoir pour bien sûr, qu'on a voulu les confisquer dans les états du Danemarck. Tant mieux : avou certain, qu'on rencontre dans vos récits la pure vérité.

Me voilà, mon très-cher ami, à la fin d'une bien longue lettre. Si je suivais mon penchant de m'entretenir avec vous, peut-être seriés-vous obligé de lire encore quatre pages : je finis donc par vous demander en grace de continuer à me donner de vos chères et précieuses nouvelles, car je tiendrai à vous et pour la vie et pour la mort.

BROCARD.

Zell, ce 29 Juin 76.

#### No. VII.

Zell, ce 15 Sept. 1776.

JE vous écris, mon très-cher, digne et estimable ami, cette lettre, et qui fait réponse à la bien-chère du 30 Juillet, quelques semaines peut-être avant qu'elle partira d'ici, et

sera par conséquent un peu fort vieille au moment qu'elle aura le bonheur d'être remise entre vos mains. Je veux m'expliquer plus clairement. Le courrier ordinaire d'Hannovre en doit être pour cette fois le porteur, parce que je veux y joindre certain image chéri, dont je vous parlois dans ma précédente, et dont l'heureuse arrivée me fera plaisir, parce que vous y mettez du prix, et semblés être sensible à cette petite marque de mon souvenir et zèle, qui est bien le moindre de ceux que je désire tous les jours ardemment de vous donner en chaque rencontre. Comme il ne part qu'au commencement du mois prochain, et que je ne puis plus remettre mon voyage pour la Saxe et la Franconie au-delà du 15 du courant, je laisse aujourd'hui ce petit paquet entre les mains de mon commissionnaire d'ici, afin qu'il l'envoie à Hannovre le jour du départ du courrier. Ce même homme a le plein pouvoir de recevoir toutes les lettres à mon adresse ; et celles dont vous, cher et bien-aimé, daigneriez me ravir, ne manqueront jamais de me parvenir promptement et avec exactitude : car il vous plaira pourtant de me tenir parole et de continuer notre correspondance. Elle fait partie essentielle du peu de bonheur réel qui est mon partage dans ce monde, fera et dans le bruyant des cours et dans la retraite les délices de mon ame et un besoin que je ne saurois plus manquer.

Alis a été sommé par moi ces jours passés, afin qu'il retourne de vous rappeler, dans les dépêches qu'il a coutume de donner au courrier ordinaire, au souvenir d'Abel. A la fin, nous parviendrons pourtant de faire prêcher sur l'inactivité et l'oubli qu'on marque à votre sujet, et qui, je vous l'assure, dans des moments de réflexion, et où je récapitule votre zèle, vos mérites, votre désintéressement dans un tems plus heureux, vos peines, fatigues et même vos dangers, me rongent le cœur et m'attendrissent jusqu'aux pleurs. J'ai remis à Alis un extrait très-circonstancié et détaillé de votre dernière lettre, lequel le mettra absolument au fait de la position où vous vous trouvez vis-à-vis de quelques ministres d'Abel, et les intentions et faveurs de la haute noblesse, de sorte que par-là même Alis trouve un prétexte plausible de plaider votre cause.

Vous avés deviné juste, mon ami, en supposant que mon entrevue avec Lepy seroit touchante : elle l'a été à tous égards, et j'ai été vivement affecté lorsque le moment arriva de m'arracher de ses bras. Elle se fit à trois postes d'ici à l'insçu de tout le monde, parce que je n'avois pas même un domestique avec moi, et jusqu'à cette heure rien en a transpiré. Nous nous sommes rencontrés le soir à 9 heures, point couchés de toute la nuit, et séparés vers les 8 heures du matin. Il est sûrement un homme très-estimable, qui mérite qu'on le chérit. Vous êtes entré pour beaucoup et bien souvent dans notre conversation, mon ami. J'ai donné ma parole de venir au Février ou Mars, tems vers lequel je serai de retour à Zell, leur rendre la visite de quelques jours, dans la ville qui leur est la plus proche ; car ils ne sont pas gens à écrire beaucoup, à ce qui me semble.

Je languis après le moment que vos nouvelles lettres sur l'histoire de la France, écrites pendant les momens de loisir de votre voyage, paroissent au jour ; et je suis assés peu modeste de vous les demander avec la plus vive instance *d'abord* que le courrier ordinaire retourne à Hannovre. Pour plus de sûreté, faites une enveloppe à ma lettre avec l'adresse,—*A Monsieur Mäntel, valet de chambre de feu S. M. la Reine de Dannem. à Zell.* On m'a aussi parlé dernièrement d'une brochure qui vient de paroître à Londres au sujet de notre chère et respectable défunte protectrice, qui a pour titre, "Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen ;" quoique l'authenticité de ces lettres est incontestablement fausse, je serois pourtant bien aise de les posséder, vû que je forme collection de tout ce qui a rapport à sa mémoire et à l'évènement douloureux de sa mort. Oserai-je donc, mon très-cher et bien-aimé ami, vous supplier de vouloir bien, par le courrier ordinaire, me faire avoir la dite brochure ? Je ferai en sorte que le prix de son achat vous soit remboursé à Londres.

Et de cette façon je serois donc pour aujourd'hui au bout de ma lettre. Si je voulois y joindre tout ce que mon cœur sent pour vous, les vœux que je ne cesse et que je ne cesserai de ma vie de faire pour votre bien-être et

prospérité, et les assurances du zèle et inviolable dévouement qui m'anime quand il s'agit de vous, je prendrois une autre feuille et courerois risque de tomber dans les rédites et de vous déplaire par-là. D'ailleurs, les momens du jour du départ sont, comme vous savés, un peu turbulans. Vivés donc, cher ami, heureux et content ; vous ne sortirez jamais de mon cœur et souvenir. N'oubliez pas celui qui est à vous

*Usque ad mortem.*

P. S<sup>um</sup>.—Encore un mot, mon cher ami, et même dans le moment où je mets pied dans la voiture pour partir. J'ai reçu ce matin une lettre d'Alis, où il me dit, qu'il vous avoit recommandé dernièrement et à une occasion désirée : que cependant il croyoit et vous conseilloit même de présenter une requette au R. d'y demander une place dans un département de quelque secrétaire d'état, et de nommer les Lords Barrington et Nugent vos protecteurs.

Adieu, mon cher : agissés de cette façon, s'il faire se peut, je suis tout à vous.

#### No. VIII.

Zelle, ce 25 Février 1777.

D'où prendrai-je, mon bien-cher, mon digne et estimable ami, toutes les expressions de la joie et de la vive reconnaissance qui ont pénétrées mon âme à la réception de vos trois chères lettres du 30 Juillet, 8 d'Octobre et 29 de Novembre de l'année passée ? Mais comment vous dépeindrai-je ma surprise de voir par la dernière, que vous n'ayés point reçu, par la voye du quartier courier, qui partit d'Hannovre environ le 25 Octobre 1776, ma missive du 15 Sept. avec le P. S<sup>um</sup> de la même date, et une petite boîte marquée M. N. W. dans laquelle se trouvoit le portrait en cire de feu notre incomparable protectrice ? Permettés, cher ami, que je vous mette, tant que possible est, au fait des événemens qui ont mis un si long et pénible intervalle dans notre correspondance. Dieu veuille que vous rétrouviés encore mes dites lettres et le portrait !



Je reçus votre chère lettre de Londres, Jermyn Street, du 30 Juillet, par la poste ordinaire, et assés vite, c'est à dire le 6 d'Août. Ne connoissant une voye plus sûre et commode de répondre et d'y joindre la boëte en question que celle du courrier d'H——, je dresse (parce que j'étois nécessité d'entreprendre le 15 Sept. un voyage en Saxe) et l'une et l'autre quelque tems d'avance, la date du 15 de Sept.; et comme Alis me marque, un jour de poste avant mon départ, qu'il vous avoit nommé et recommandé de nouveau à Abel, j'y joins deux mots dans un P. S<sup>um</sup>, remets le tout entre les mains du fidel valet de chambre de la chère Agujari: celui-ci le garde jusqu'au moment que le courrier veut se mettre en route, le lui envoie directement avec une lettre de sa part, dans laquelle il recommande ce paquet pour vous, comme un effet de valeur et d'un grand prix; reçoit de lui-même l'assurance qu'il en auroit le plus grand soin.

Le 24 Octobre le même valet de chambre, mon commissionnaire institué, m'envoie en Saxe votre chère lettre du 8 Octobre, qui étoit arrivée par la poste. Je la mets dans mon bureau, n'y fait point de réponse, parce que je voulus attendre la vôtre, que je me flattois recevoir par le courrier retournant. En attendant les choses restent là; mon homme me mande, qu'apparemment Mr. Wr—— n'avoit pas ou le tems de m'écrire ou quoi, je commençois à m'inquiéter, mais pour y voir bien clair, je ne voulus rien faire qu'après être de retour moi-même. Trois jours après celui ci (et il avoit lieu le 12 du courant), Alis me fait remettre par mon caissier, qui avoit été pendant mon absence à Han . . . chès ses parens, la vôtre du 29 Nov. Sa prudence étoit louable: mais cela ne diminuoit point ma surprise sur ce que vous n'ayés rien reçu. Dès-lors je fis incessamment écrire au dit courrier, nommé Ulenbecker, et il répond hier:

“Qu'il avoit porté la lettre et la dite boëte dans plus que quatre caffés où vous aviés autrefois coûtume d'aller et de vous trouver: qu'à la fin il avoit appris que vous étiez faire un voyage dans le pays: en quoi il avoit été d'autant plus confirmé, qu'il s'étoit trouvé nombre de lettres à votre adresse, avec lesquelles il avoit aussi déposé la boëte, c'est

à dire, à la maison où les lettres d'Allemagne sont portées et arrivent, et qu'elle s'y trouveroit encore."

De grace, mon cher ami, hâtes-vous de vous en informer; ayés recours à la bonté de Mr. Hinüber. Pour votre légitimation, je joins l'original de la réponse du courier donnée au valet de chambre Mäntel. S'ils ne se trouvent point, je ferai punir ce misérable d'importance, quoique cela ne peut en rien diminuer la sensible douleur que ce revers me causeroit.

Allons à cette heure à répondre en détail sur vos deux chères lettres du 8 d'Octobre et 29 Nov.

Si Fierville et Lepy vous ont marqués dans leurs lettres leur étonnement et douleur sur l'inactivité et le silence d'Abel au sujet de votre emplacement comme une juste récompense qui vous est due, jugés quelle est l'amertume et l'inquiétude de *mon* cœur, et comme il est vivement affecté par la position actuelle d'un ami au bonheur duquel je porte mes vœux et mes attentions presque plus qu'au mien même, et que je voudrois savoir aussi heureux qu'on peut l'être dans ce monde ci-bas ! Je souffre plus que tout autre, ayant été témoin oculaire de la prudence, de l'infatigabilité et du zèle ardent, qui vous enflammoient à rendre service et à vous vouer aux intérêts d'une personne dont les manes me sont sacrés, et par l'enlèvement de laquelle j'ai vu écrouler le bâtiment de ma fortune, et celle d'un nombre de mes amis chéris et estimables. Depuis je vous ai appris à connoître du côté brillant d'un esprit bien cultivé, de savoir et de plus belles connoissances, et toutes ces belles qualités, ce mérite ne peut point vous conduire à la lice d'un emplacement aussi modeste et modique que vous la demandés ? Cela désespère. Mais malgré ces obstacles, il est dans mon cœur une voix qui me dit qu'avec le tems tout ira bien. C'est aussi de quoi Alis m'assure par une de ses lettres du 14 du courant. Il ne semble point vouloir approuver l'idée dont vous avés fait part à lui et à moi dans la dernière missive ; c'est à dire, de remettre à Abel dans une petite cassette cachetée le cours et la nature de votre négociation au sujet de l'Agujari. Il trouve celle de présenter par le Lord Nugent, ou quelque autre protecteur,

une requête à Abel, et d'y demander simplement une place dans un bureau d'état plus naturelle et moins épineuse ; et je crois qu'il a raison, car le prétexte de vous donner une charge est peut-être ce qui l'embarrasse ; mais il le trouveroit dans la requête et dans l'intercession de celui qui la lui remet. D'un côté cependant je ne vois pas bien clair. Il n'est qu'une voix au sujet de la probité, de la justice et de la candeur d'ame d'Abel : cesseroit-il d'agir par ces sentimens uniquement vis-à-vis de vous ? Seriez-vous le seul d'avoir de le plaindre à si juste titre ? Il faut donc qu'il aye encore de bien fortes raisons pour rester inébranlable contre les sollicitations d'Alis. Mais pourquoi ne les manifeste-il pas ? Cela ne pourroit pas le compromettre—pas être au-dessous de son rang. Pourquoi pas dire, de quelle façon on doit s'y prendre ? Oh si jamais j'apprends que vous avés obtenu votre but, je respirerai plus à mon aise ; j'érigerai à Abel dans mon cœur un autel, auquel la plus vive reconnoissance fera mon sacrifice quotidien.

Alis vous aura expliqué lui-même et plus au long ce qu'il y a encore à faire et ce qu'il en pense. Foible comme je suis, sans influence, sans le moindre soutien, étranger moi-même et au caprice d'une fortune bien modique, je ne puis faire pour mes amis que des vœux ; mais ils sont d'autant plus ardents et sincères : je mesure d'après leurs peines et leurs satisfactions les miennes.

Aujourd'hui je compte notifier à Lepy mon retour. Nous étions convenus que je viendrois cet hyver moi-même à Avignon, mais mon retour retardé a tout anéanti : la saison est déjà trop avancée, et je crains qu'il n'en sera rien. En outre, la commission dont vous me savés chargé exige nécessairement ma présence ces jours-cy.

Au reste, je ne crains pas que nos lettres sont interceptées ; cependant je me sers aujourd'hui de la nouvelle adresse.

Aurai-je encore les "Mémoires des Rois de la France de la Race de Valois ?" Vous seriez bien bon et aimable à me les envoyer si l'occasion s'en trouve.

De grace, marqués-moi quel peut être l'auteur des "Memoires of an Unfortunate Queen, interspersed with Letters

written by Herself. London, J. Bew, 1776." Il est plus que zélé, dit-on, pour nous, mais le stile et les matériaux ne doivent pas être des plus épurés et solides.

Adieu, mon très-cher, mon bien-aimé ami, mon digne Wr—. Si les battemens de cœur pourroient être entendus à cent lieues de distance, vous vous convainqueriez par vous-même que le mien est en agitation quand je vous nomme, quand je m'occupe de vous. Adieu donc. Pas même la mort nous séparera.

## No. IX.

SEROIT-IL bien possible, mon bien-aimé et digne ami, que l'irrégularité dont je me rends coupable dans notre correspondance, diminue et absorbe les sentimens de bonté et de l'amitié précieuse que nous nous s'étions réciproquement voués pour le reste de nos jours ? Vous n'en êtes pas capable ; et moi, je vous aime, je vous estime trop, pour que mon cœur vous oublie, si même ma plume trouve si rarement le loisir de m'entretenir à vous. Quoique toujours bien portant et en possession de votre chérissime lettre du 11 Mars depuis le 18, j'ose avouer que nombre de petites absences, et d'autres excursions en affaire, m'ont privé du bien doux plaisir de vous faire parvenir quelques nouvelles de ma part. Mais actuellement il me tarde d'avoir des vôtres, et surtout d'être informé, si depuis le long intervalle de notre silence, il ne s'est rien changé dans votre sort, et si vous n'avez fait aucune démarche pour accélérer les vues que vous aviez formées. Alis s'étoit proposé à deux ou trois reprises de venir pour quelques jours nous voir, mais il n'en a rien fait ; mes intentions de m'expliquer vis-à-vis de lui sur votre sujet sont par-là frustrées, et me laissent les regrets, que selon toute apparence le Ciel me prive du bonheur d'avoir contribué par mon zèle et dévouement au moindre soutien de vos vœux. Si cependant je pourrois être persuadé, qu'indépendamment de la petite charge que vous ambitionnés à si juste titre, et dont la difficulté de l'obtenir me paroît une énigme inexplicable, vous auriez de quoi vivre conformément à

votre rang et à la situation qu'un homme de votre mérite peut exiger de la Providence, je serois bien plus tranquille à votre sujet. Par des expériences que j'ai faites dans le petit cercle de ma destinée, et les principes qu'on se forme au bout d'une étude du monde et des sorts des hommes comme ils sont communément, je pretends, qu'à tout égard on n'est pas malheureux si le Ciel nous laisse suivre nos penchans dans une sorte de retraite, ignorés de la multitude, estimés et distingués de ceux qui se donnent la peine de nous apprécier au juste, et doués de quelques talens, par lesquels nous sommes à même de faire tout le bien qu'on nous demande, à prêter de l'assistance à ceux qui nous appellent à leur secours, et d'emporter de ce monde le témoignage d'avoir été honnête et toujours prêt de servir au prochain si on étoit capable. Or, mon ami, dites-moi si votre fortune suffit pour vous fournir le nécessaire pour vous laisser vivre avec décence et à votre aise, en cas que les vues que nous formons venoient à manquer? Je commence petit-à-petit à me former pour l'avenir un plan de vivre qui répond à-peu-près aux idées avec lesquelles je voudrois vous familiariser; et quoique je suis bien plus âgé que vous, et vous doués d'un plus grand fonds d'activité que moi, il me semble qu'avec certaines restrictions selles sont praticables pour toute époque de la vie humaine.

Quelle joie pour moi, mon très-cher et digne ami, de vous revoir un jour, ou ici, ou, ce qui me feroit bien plus de plaisir, à une campagne près de Leipzig dans la Haute Saxe, où je projette de m'établir pour toujours, si une fois la commission de laquelle vous me savés chargé a cessée de se trouver entre mes mains. Pour me familiariser peu-à-peu avec la verdure et l'air champêtre, j'ai quitté ma maison en ville et ai pris une bien belle et grande dans les extrémités des fauxbourgs, qui a un assés vaste jardin, dont l'entretien et les plantations m'occupent et me font plaisir. Il se trouve que c'est celle que notre ami Lepy et son frère possèdent ici. Je reçois de tems en tems des nouvelles de celui-ci, quoique il ne parle point du tout de ce qui se passe au Nord, et de deux objets qui nous y

intéressent le plus. Il a deux graves procès contre un fripon de fermier, qui plaide ici aux tribunaux de justice, et m'a fait son homme de sollicitation ; de quoi je suis bien aise, étant par-là en état de lui être bon et utile à quelque chose.

Le cercueil de feu la chère maîtresse, qui sera fait de bois de mahogany et décoré de bronzes dorées, n'est point achevé ; d'autant plus belles et magnifiques seront les décorations : dommage que le tout sera fourré dans un caveau, qui est rempli, et où à peine le grand jour entre. Le monument que les états font ériger se trouve de même encore entre les mains de l'artiste, et je doute, qui pourra être posé dans un an. Adieu, mon bien cher et estimable ami. Vous adresserez toujours vos lettres à L— : je vous serre à mon cœur et suis *usque ad mortem*

Votre dévoué et inviolablement  
attaché ami.

Z. ce 1 Juillet 77.

## No. X.

## NAMES BETWEEN MONS. DE S—K—F AND ME.

The K. of E. . . . .	Abel.
The K. of D. . . . .	Bach.
The Q. C. M. . . . .	Agujari.
——— Juliana . . . . .	Sestini.
The Pr. F—c . . . . .	Millico.
The Pri—sse Fr—c . . . . .	Syrmen.
Lic—n . . . . .	Alis.
B—w . . . . .	Lepy.
Sch—n . . . . .	Grenier.
Tex—r . . . . .	Fierville.
Schaques . . . . .	Heinel.
K—r B—r . . . . .	Valois.
P. of He—c . . . . .	Molé.
Eichstet . . . . .	Vestris.
W—ll . . . . .	Le Kain.
S—k—f . . . . .	Brocard.
Le Vieux C—e Al— . . . . .	Moulin.

Fe—d Al— . . . . .	La Motte.
Pergolese . . . . .	Rantzau.
Lord Su—k . . . . .	Colli.
Diedenhof . . . . .	Wolf.
Beringshold . . . . .	Conjolini.
Da Capo . . . . .	Ami de Beringshold.
Metastasio . . . . .	Ami de Diedenhof.
Handel . . . . .	Gouldsberg.
Marie Mancini . . . . .	La Prin <sup>ss</sup> Her <sup>e</sup> .
Vauglas . . . . .	P. of Bevern.
Cop—n . . . . .	Montpellier.
Lo—n . . . . .	Sud.
Al—a . . . . .	Toulon.
Ha—h . . . . .	Avignon.
Re—rg . . . . .	Lyons.
Z—l . . . . .	Bourdeaux.

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CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BARON DE BULOW.

## No. I.

LE Roi donne son plein consentement. Tout est prêt pour mon retour, mais l'argent manque. Le Roi ne donnera rien. Il faut en trouver, et m'envoyer. J'attends avec impatience votre réponse.

Adieu, mon cher ami !

N. WRAXALL.

6 Decembre 1774.

Londres.

A Mons. le Baron de B—w.

## No. II.

("Most secret, and most important.")

MONSIEUR,—La nouvelle la plus malheureuse du monde m'avoit mis dans un tel état d'anéantissement, qu'il n'a été jusqu'ici pas possible de vous dire un mot.

Occupé avec Grenier à délibérer sur les moyens le plus prompts pour exécuter le plan, et rempli de nouvelles espérances non équivoques, fixant pour ainsi dire, malgré, le silence opiniâtre de Abel, le jour, le moment tant désiré, je reçois une lettre de Brocard. Je l'ouvre avec précipitation, dans l'idée d'y trouver les choses les plus agréables ; mais, au contraire, la première ligne annonce l'arrêt du destin le plus cruel. Je ne dirai rien de ce que je sentis dans un moment aussi inattendu, puisque je suis sûr que vous vous en faites une idée exacte par la situation dans laquelle vous vous serez trouvé vous-même en apprenant notre malheur. C'en est donc fait de notre bonheur ! Il s'est enfui pour toujours. Nous n'avons pas dû être heureux, nous n'avons pas dû le rendre les autres ! Il ne nous reste auqu'un espoir. Nous rentrons dans le néant dont nous voulions sortir. Mais que ce fantôme de bonheur envolé ne nous emporte pas votre amitié et attachement. Comptés jusqu'à la fin de mes jours sur le mien. Mes amis vous assurent la même chose. Nous vous devons trop pour devenir ingrat ; tout qui dépendra de nous pour vous le témoigner ne sera jamais négligé. Parlés et disposés de ce qu'il y a en notre pouvoir. Si vous avés eu encore des despences, dites-le-moi, et j'en ferai mon rapport. Continués surtout, je vous en conjure, dans quel coin du monde que vous vous trouverés, de me donner de vos nouvelles.

“ Private } Dans votre lettre du 21, vous dites que vous  
 affairs.” } avés eu la bonté de vous informer d'un carosse  
 coupé pour la ville, et que vous en avés trouvé un très-bon.  
 Je vous suis infiniment redevable de votre amitié, et  
 j'espère que Fierville vous aura marqué ce dont je l'ai  
 chargé, et que vous aurés eu la bonté d'arrêter le dit  
 carosse. Je vous enverrai au premier jour l'argent néces-  
 saire : comptés là-dessus, et pardonnés que j'ai tardé jus-  
 qu'ici. Faites-moi la grace de m'envoyer le carosse le plus  
 tôt possible, et ayés celle de m'acheter aussi deux harnois  
 pour deux chevaux. Je connois votre bon goût, et me  
 réjouis de recevoir un joli équipage anglois. J'aime tout



ce qui est de ce paÿs-là, de cœur et d'ame, et voudrois moi-même en être.

Avés-vous eu la bonté d'avoir eu soin de cette pièce d'étoffe ? Sera-t-elle bientôt tiente, et arrivera-t-elle bientôt ?

Ne pourriés-vous pas me faire l'amitié de me donner une bonne adresse à quelqu'un à Londres, qui voudroit faire des commissions, et exécuter celle que je lui demanderois quand j'aurois besoin de quelque-chose ? Il faudroit que ce fût un homme entendu et sûr, qui ménaga mes interrets, et à qui je pourrois payer des provisions pour sa peine. Par ce moyen on peut avoir de votre paÿs tout ce qu'on veut : on le reçoit bon, et non pas si cher que quand on l'achète des marchands d'ici.

A l'écriture de celle-ci vous ne me reconnoitrés pas : mais mes sentiments vous diront qui je suis, et que je vous suis attaché pour la vie.

Le 22 de Maÿ.

Donnés-moi bientôt de vous nouvelles, et dites-moi si vous n'avés rien entendu de Abel, et comment il a reçu la triste nouvelle.

"From the Baron de B——, only a few  
days after the Queen of D.'s death.  
Most important !"

#### LETTERS FROM THE BARON DE LICHTENSTEIN.

##### No. I.

A Londres, ce 1<sup>ier</sup> Janv. 1775.

MONSIEUR,—Je viens de recevoir dans ce moment la lettre ci-jointe, et je ne manque pas de vous la fair parvenir tout de suite sous votre adresse que vous avés eu la bonté de donner avant votre départe d'ici.

Mes correspondants sur l'affaire en question ne m'ont dit jusqu'ici autre chose, sinon qu'on avoit reçu la nouvelle du consentement et de l'approbation sur le projet que vous

savés, monsieur, avec beaucoup de joie et de satisfaction, et qu'on m'écrirait plus amplement sur ce sujet par l'occasion du courrier qui arriverait à Londres à-peu-près vers le mi du mois de Janvier. J'ai l'honneur d'être,

Monsieur,  
 Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,  
 H. I. B. DE L.

## No. II.

J'AI reçu, monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire en date du 14<sup>me</sup> de Mars. Je suis très-fâché que mes occupations et mon emploi à Hannovre ne me permettent pas de m'arrêter ici jusqu'au tems de votre retour pour avoir la satisfaction d'apprendre le succès de votre voyage, n'en ayant pas eu, comme vous vous imaginés, des nouvelles par la personne en question. En attendant, j'ai donné l'avis à l'endroit nécessaire de votre arrivée prochaine. Vous trouverez ci-jointe l'adresse de la personne à laquelle *on* veut que vous remettiez vos lettres dont vous pourriez être chargé. Je dois vous dire de n'être pas surpris si vous ne recevés point de réponse. *On* l'adressera à moi. Des raisons que vous savés, c'est à dire qu'on ne donnera rien d'écrit de sa main touchant cette affaire, ne permettent pas d'agir autrement. Si *on* ne change pas de sentiment, et si *on* ne vous fait pas dire par celui auquel vous donnerés vos lettres, d'attendre ici, je ne vois pas d'autre expédient, que de retourner dans une quinzaine de jours et de venir me trouver à Hannovre, où je compte d'être infailliblement vers la fin du mois d'Avril.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec la considération la plus distinguée, Monsieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

A Londres, ce 24 de Mars, 1775.

B. L.

*Adresse de la personne à laquelle Mr. Wr. remettra des lettres :*

Monsieur de Hlnuber, Jermain-street, St. James.

("Received in London the 4th of April 1775."—N. W. W.)

## No. III.

A Hannovre, ce 9<sup>me</sup> Janvier, 1777.

MONSIEUR,—Ayant perdu, ou plutot brûlé, avec tous les papiers relatives à l'affaire en question, l'adresse que vous m'aviez donné à Londres, pour vous faire parvenir avec sûreté mes lettres, je n'ai pu hasarder de répondre à l'honneur de votre dernière du 29 Novemb. par la poste ordinaire. J'ai préféré, monsieur, d'attendre le départ du courier d'aujourd'hui le porteur de celle-ci, qui ne manquera pas de faire les recherches nécessaires pour trouver les moyens de vous la remettre en maines propres.

Convaincu comme je le suis du zèle, du parfait dévouement et du désintéressement, autant que du succès heureux, avec lequel vous avés servi dans cette affaire difficile et épineuse, je ne sçaurois assés vous marquer mes regrets de vous savoir encore jusqu'ici sans aucune récompence. Persuadés-vous, monsieur, que j'ai fait tout mon possible pour vous la faire avoir, et que je tenterai par de nouvelles représentations à contribuer d'accélérer cette récompence juste et due à vos peines et services.

Quoique je ne désapprouve nullement le projet que vous avés formé de vous remettre au souvenir du Roi par l'envoi du mémoire dressé sur les circonstances de la négociation dans laquelle vous étiés employé, j'ose vous prier de remettre cette dernière tentative encore pour quelque tems, et d'attendre la réponse de Mr. de S——ff, sur la lettre que vous m'avés envoyée pour la lui faire tenir : Commission dont je n'ai pu m'acquitter, Mr. de S——ff se trouvant absent de Zelle depuis 3 mois : mais sachant qu'il doit nécessairement être de retour vers la fin de ce mois, vous pouvés compter, monsieur, que vous aurés infailliblement sa réponse dans le courant du mois de Février, et avec elle, les avis de l'effet de ma dernière lettre à sa majesté sur ce sujet.

Il ne me reste qu'à vous souhaiter tout le bonheur que vous mérités, et de vous assurer de la part sincère que je prendrai, si mes vœux pour votre fortune et contentement

se réalisent. J'ai l'honneur d'être avec les sentimens de la considération la plus distinguée, Monsieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

BARON DE LICHTENSTEIN.

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PAPERS RESPECTING THE QUEEN OF DENMARK.

No. I.

Copie.

Zelle, ce 15 Mai, 75.

La maladie épidémique qui nous menaça n'existe plus ici ; en ville elle n'a point été du tout, et au chateau elle n'a emporté qu'un page et notre chere Reine, qui fait à si juste titre l'objet de nos plus sinceres régrets ; et cela est général. Sa cour, qui l'idolâtroit, est vraiment désolée, malgré la ferme persuasion que notre respectable maître aura soin d'eux, mais c'est pour elle-même qu'on la regrette, et vous ne sauriez vous imaginer l'affliction et la consternation qui se répandit dans toute la ville lorsqu'on la sçut en danger. Elle l'étoit du premier moment qu'elle tomba malade par le jugement de notre habile medecin Leyser ; elle s'en aperçut d'abord elle-même, et lui dit en propres termes : " Vous m'avez tiré deux fois depuis le mois d'Octobre de deux maladies assez sérieuses, mais de celle-ci vous n'en viendrez point à bout : " et elle ne dit que malheureusement trop vrai. La fièvre du premier moment étoit d'une violence prouvée par 131 *Pulsschläge* dans une minute, et les deux derniers jours l'on ne pouvoit plus les compter. Leyser demanda Zimmermann d'Hannovre, qui vint à son secours, mais sans effet. Le *Friesel* sortit, mais avec des taches qui denotoient une fièvre pourprée, et c'est aussi à cette malheureuse maladie et aux décrets d'une Providence immuable que nous devons sa perte. Après avoir souffert en Chrétienne avec une patience et une resignation parfaite et presque sans exemple, gardé connoissance, marqué comme de coutume les plus tendres et gra-

cieuses attentions pour ses dames d'honneur qui la soignoient dans sa maladie, et parlé jusqu'au dernier moment, elle a fini sa carrière d'une façon qui a édifié et pénétré d'admiration tous les assistans. Elle a vu notre digne Surintendant-general Jacobi et le Ministre Lehzen, qui ne l'a pas quitté et à qui elle a quasi dicté ce qu'il devoit lui lire à plusieurs reprises et entre ce beau Cantique de Gellert *über die Liebe der Feinde—Nie will ich dem zu schaden suchen*—en repetant souvent le 5<sup>ème</sup> vers. En un mot, ces dernières heures, où les masques de tous les humains tombent, sa fermété vraiment stoïque avec laquelle elle paroissoit soutenir les revers douloureux d'une infortune si éclatée, la magnanimité de toutes les vertus humaines, peut-être la plus difficile à pratiquer envers ses adversaires, qui ne cessoient point de la persecuter, joint à la conduite irréprochable qu'elle a mené pendant tout le tems que nous avons eu le bonheur de la posséder, nous persuadent, Mr., de la malignité des ennemis que cette auguste princesse a eu. Elle leur a pardonné, et il faut que nous le fassions aussi, en souhaitant qu'ils le reconnoissent pour se convertir; et il n'y a qu'une voix générale pour se convaincre què si cette jeune Reine étoit tombée en des bonnes mains, et moins exposée et abandonnée aux pièges qu'on lui dressa dès son arrivée à Copenhague, dans un age où l'expérience ne pouvoit que lui manquer, elle auroit fait, et par son cœur et son esprit si bien orné, les délices de tout un peuple.

A cause d'une nécessité absolue il a fallu déposer son corps après deux fois 24 heures dans le caveau des Ducs de Zelle, jusqu'au tems que le Roi d'Angleterre regle la pompe de ces funerailles. Cela s'est fait avec beaucoup d'ordre et de décence par le Grand Maréchal de Lichtenstein. Aux sermons à l'église et à la lecture de la *Abdankung* toute la ville a fondu en larmes depuis le premier jusqu'au dernier. Son affabilité et sa douceur lui avoient gagné les cœurs même du plus petit peuple. Les Juifs ouvrirent d'abord leur temple pour les prières publiques, et dans les rues l'on n'entendoit que des gémissemens et des invocations pour le rétablissement *unsrer guten und*

*lieben Königin.* Les Etats du Duché de Lunebourg assemblés à Zelle conjointement avec d'autres corps de la magistrature ont envoyé des lettres de condolence au Roi, remplis des expressions qui marquent leur vive douleur, celle du peuple, et la consternation s'est manifestée dans toutes les classes des habitants de ces contrées.

## No. II.

## DEATH AND CHARACTER OF THE QUEEN.

SIR,—Conscious of my own incapacity to draw a portrait so masterly and difficult as that of the late Queen Caroline Matilda of Denmark, I waited in the expectation that some more able and eloquent pen would have attempted it. But few persons in this kingdom were in any degree acquainted with her life or actions while she resided in Copenhagen ; perhaps still fewer had the honour to know that exalted sufferer during the latter years which she spent in retreat at Zell. To this unacquaintance with her Majesty's person may, I doubt not, be imputed the universal silence respecting her ; and it is from the appearance of no other writer in so noble a cause that the present attempt to present her real character to the English people must derive its excuse.

Sacrificed in the first bloom of life, and decked with the fillets of royal misery, she was sent, an inexperienced victim, to a court the most despicably dissolute and debauched in Europe. The man to whom she was wedded, —I mean the present King of Denmark,—was a compound of insanity and brutality. In the frequent paroxysms of debility or frenzy to which he was subject, he resembled the unhappy Charles VI. of France ; in the intervals of riot and intemperance he seemed to emulate Alphonso VI of Portugal. Surrounded with spies and emissaries who interpreted the most trifling levities of youth into enormous crimes, the young and unguarded Queen could not long remain in such a court without giving her enemies

too favourable an opportunity to effect her fall. They succeeded, and induced the wretched King to become the engine of their malevolence, by signing the order for her imprisonment. The interposition of the British Court saved her from further violence, and conducted her to an asylum in the Electoral dominions of Hanover. Here she appeared in her true and native character. Divested of the retinue and pomp which on the throne of Denmark veiled her, in a great degree, from the inspection of nice observers, the qualities of her heart displayed themselves in her little court at Zell, and gained her universal love. Her person was dignified and graceful: she excelled in all the exercises befitting her sex, birth, and station; she danced the finest minuet in the Danish court, and managed the horse with uncommon address and spirit. She had a taste in music, and devoted much of her time, while at Zell, to the harpsichord. The characteristic style of her dress was simplicity, not magnificence; that of her deportment, an affability which, in a personage of such high rank, might be termed extreme condescension. Her talents were liberal and diffusive: she conversed with the most perfect facility in French, English, German, and Danish; and to these extraordinary attainments she added a thorough knowledge of the Italian, which she studied and admired for its beauty and delicacy. Her manners were the most polished, soft, and ingratiating; and even the contracted state of her finances could not restrain that princely munificence and liberality of temper which made her purse ever open to distress or misery. Though the natural *enjouement* and gaiety of her disposition impressed those who only saw her in the circle with the idea of tranquillity, of happiness; yet it cannot be doubted that the series of cruel and unmerited sufferings she underwent impressed her mind very deeply, and perhaps slowly conduced to produce those attacks of sickness which in the end proved fatal. Banished with every circumstance of indignity from the throne of Denmark, she yet retained no sentiment of revenge or resentment against the authors of her fall, or against the Danish people. Her heart was not tainted

with ambition, and she looked back to the diadem which had been torn from her brow with a calmness and a superiority of soul which might have made a Philip V. or a Victor Amadeus blush. It was not the crown she regretted: her children only employed her care. The feelings of the Queen were absorbed in those of the mother; and if she wept the day when she quitted the island of Zealand, it was because she was then bereft of those dear objects of her maternal fondness. Two or three months before her death, she showed with transports of joy to Madame d'O——, her first lady of the bedchamber, a little portrait of the Prince Royal her son, which she had just received. It happened that this lady, some few days after, entered the Queen's apartment at an unusual hour: she was surprised at hearing her Majesty talk, though quite alone. While she stood in this attitude of astonishment, unable to retire, the Queen turned suddenly round, and addressing herself to her with that charming smile which she alone could preserve at a moment when her heart was torn with the most acute sensations, "What must you think," said she, "of a circumstance so extraordinary as that of overhearing me talk, though you find me perfectly alone?—but it was to this dear and cherished image I addressed my conversation. And what do you imagine I said to it? Nearly the same verses which you applied not long ago to a child sensible to the happiness of having found her father; verses," added she, "which I changed after the manner following." The verses are French, and too delicate to admit of a translation.

"Eh ! qui donc, comme moi, goûteroit la douceur  
De t'appeller mon fils, d'être chère à ton cœur !  
Toi, qu'on arrache aux bras d'une mère sensible,  
Qui ne pleure que toi, dans ce destin terrible."

Madame d'O—— could not speak: she burst into tears, and, overcome with her own emotions, retired hastily from the royal presence.

When she was first apprehended to be in danger from the disorder which seized her, anxiety and consternation



were spread through her whole little court, which idolised her; but when she expired, no language can express the horror and silent grief visible in every apartment of the palace. Leyser, the physician who attended her Majesty during her whole illness, dreaded the event from the first moment. She saw it, and, impressed with a presentiment of her approaching death, which proved but too true, "You have twice," said she, "extricated me from very dangerous indispositions since the month of October; but this exceeds your skill: I know I am not within the help of medicine." Leyser desired that the celebrated physician Zimmermann might be called in from Hanover. He was so; but her Majesty's illness, which was a most violent spotted fever, baffled every endeavour. At the beginning her pulse beat a hundred and thirty-one strokes in a minute, but during the two last days it was impossible to count them. She bore the pains of her distemper with exquisite patience, and even showed the most delicate and generous attentions to her maids of honour who waited by her. Her senses, speech, and understanding she preserved to the last moment; and only a short time before her death expressed the most perfect forgiveness of all those enemies who had persecuted and calumniated her during life. Monsieur de Lichtenstein, Grand Maréchal of the Court of Hanover, presided at the funeral rites, which were conducted with a pomp suited to her regal dignity. Her Majesty's body was interred with her ancestors the Dukes of Zell. The streets and the great churches were thronged with crowds of people, drawn by the sincerest grief and condolence, to behold the mournful obsequies of their benefactress pass along in silent state. It was a scene the most affecting and awful to be imagined: nothing was heard but groans, invocations to Heaven, interrupted by sobs and tears, through every quarter of the city. The death of this amiable princess most strikingly reminds one of that of Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, in the last century. They were both eminent for their accomplishments of mind and person; they equally constituted the brightest ornament of the courts in which they resided; they were both torn

away in the pride of youth by violent and short distempers, and in both were some suspicions of unnatural means, commonly received. But the most striking proof of the love and attachment borne to the Queen, and of the impression which her virtues had made among all ranks of people in the country where she died, is the resolution which the States of Lunenbourg framed at Hanover on the 10th of last month.

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